Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 89 | SATURDAY MARCH 29, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com 50¢

Visit us online @ www.saipantribune.com

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Would you support another round of austerity Fridays and unpaid holidays in government?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Outburst

The stage-managed tour of Tibet's holiest temple was disrupted by an emotional outburst by the red-robed monks.

ASIA...PAGE 10

Scene Stealer

Nicolas Sarkozy did most of the talking, but it was his wife who made the headlines.

WORLD...Page 11

Guilty Plea

Rapper T.I. pleaded guilty Thursday to federal weapons possession charges.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

Senate rejects House-passed budget. **PAGE 2**

Off-island trainings, conferences put on hold. **PAGE 3**

$7,901 for a circumcision

Parent outraged over son's hospital bill

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

On March 25, a working class mother took her son to the Commonwealth Health Center for his circumcision, just two weeks after his 18th birthday. The procedure, said to be a simple and quick one, lasted exactly an hour and nine minutes.

See $7,901 on Page 4

2 strong quakes hit Marianas

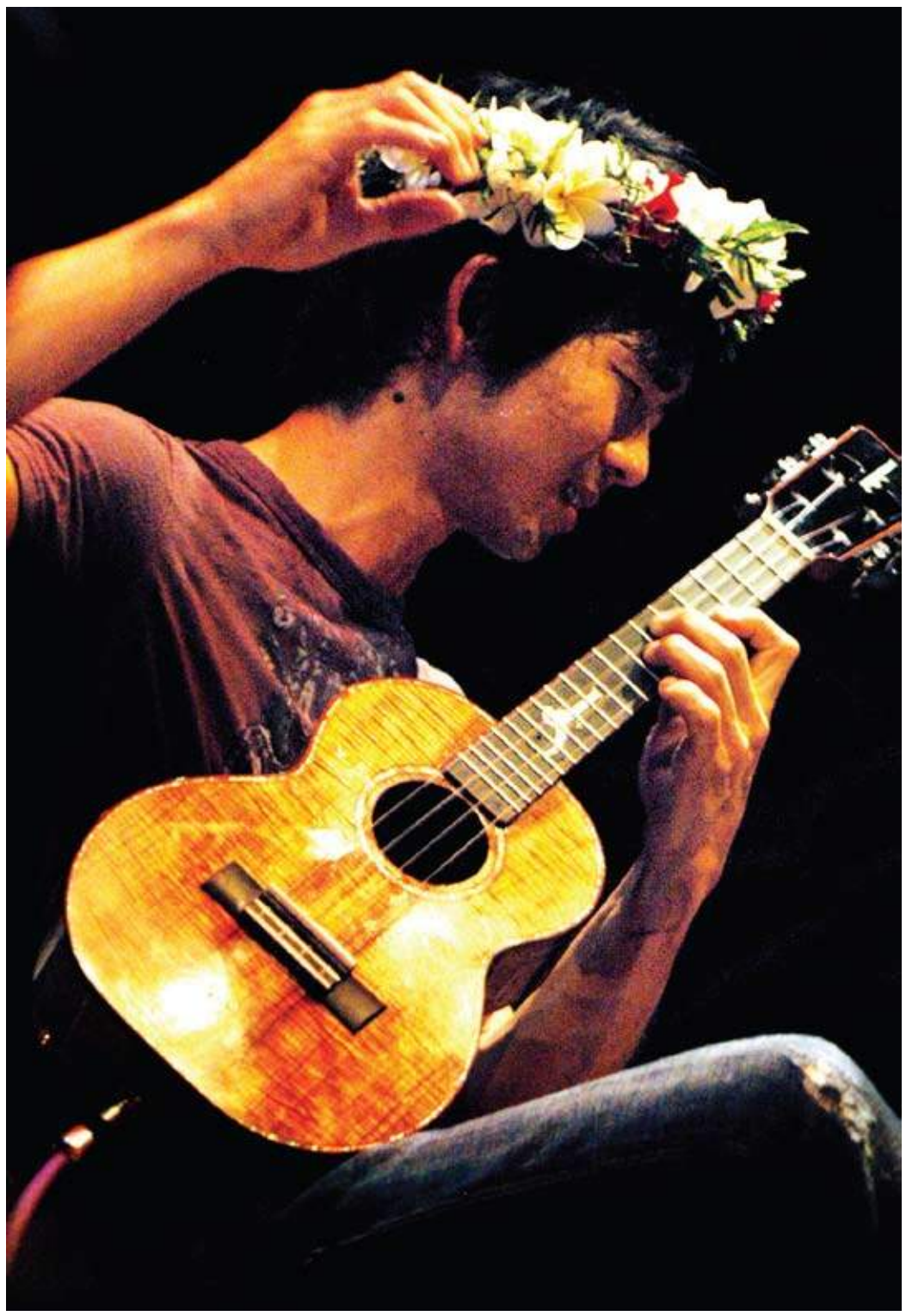
By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Marianas region was shaken by a 5.4 magnitude earthquake as people of the island chain were just about to get up for work at 6:06am Thursday morning. A 5.3 magnitude temblor hit Rota the following day.

According to Emergency Management Office geophysical seismic technician Juan Camacho, a medium-sized tremor hit the Marianas on March 27 at a depth of 64.7 miles with its epicenter located 15 miles northeast of Hagatna, Guam; 45 miles south-southwest of Rota, 125 miles south-southwest of Saipan, and 195 miles south-southwest of Anatahan.

Camacho said the moderate temblor did not generate any destructive Pacific-wide tsunami and the EMO did not issue any tsunami warning.

See 2 STRONG on Page 4



HENDRIX OF THE UKULELE JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Jake Shimabukuro, the "Jimi Hendrix of the ukulele," combines elements of jazz, rock, folk, blues and classical music in an extraordinary performance during the Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands and Beautify CNMI's fundraising concert dubbed "A Magical Night of Ukulele with Jake Shimabukuro" at the Saipan World Resort Thursday.

Food prices soaring worldwide

AP

A man sells rice from the National Food Authority at a store in Manila on Thursday March 27, 2008.

MEXICO CITY (AP)—If you're seeing your grocery bill go up, you're not alone.

From subsistence farmers eating rice in Ecuador to gourmets feasting on escargot in France, consumers worldwide face rising food prices in what analysts call a perfect storm of conditions. Freak weather is a factor. But so are dramatic changes in the global economy, including higher oil prices, lower food reserves and growing consumer demand in China and India.

The world's poorest nations still harbor the greatest hunger risk.

See FOOD on Page 4

RELATED NEWS

Turmoil feared as rice prices rise.

PAGE 12

Local

Senate rejects House-passed budget

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate rejected yesterday the House-passed appropriation bill to pave the way for new legislation addressing the government's budget for the current fiscal year.

Six senators held an emergency session Friday afternoon to act on the bill at the insistence of some members of the House of Representatives.

Upper House members present at the session were Senate President Pete P. Reyes, Vice President Felix Mendiola, Fiscal Affairs Committee chairwoman Maria T. Pangelinan, Sen. Paul A. Manglona, Sen. Paterno Hocog, and Sen. Henry San Nicolas.

The Senate previously entertained the budget bill, House Bill 16-51. But no action was taken because the Fiscal Affairs Committee raised concerns about the measure. Instead of voting on the bill, the Senate asked to form a joint panel with the House to sort out disagreements on the bill's provisions.

But in a meeting between the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee yesterday, the House Ways and Means Committee pointed out technical problems with the Senate's proposed approach.

A joint conference committee is formed when the two chambers have passed different versions of a bill. The committee's task is to negotiate a compromise bill that both houses can accept.

Thus, the House committee noted, a joint committee cannot be formed with the budget bill still officially pending before the Senate.

Reyes said the Senate agreed to reject the bill to get technicality issues out of the way. He said the Senate wanted to eliminate any excuse that might be used for further delaying the long overdue budget.

The first half of FY2008 will be over on Monday, March 31, 2008.

Pangelinan said the House is now looking at an alternative budget bill recently submitted by the Fitial administration.

The *Saipan Tribune* learned that the latest plan may involve adopting last fiscal year's budget, with some modifications. It is expected to provide for the 397 employees facing furlough and a reduced retirement contribution rate.

The new bill will be introduced in the House of Representatives early next week.

RESTAURANT
MobyDick
Fresh Sea Foods & Steak

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
SPECIAL LUNCH	SPECIAL LUNCH	SPECIAL LUNCH
Fish Muniere with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00	Fried Chicken with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00	Beef Sautee with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00
BENTO	BENTO	BENTO
Lumpia Shanghai, Chicken Chopsuey, Fish Muniere, Gelatine ONLY $7.00	Fried Chicken, Mini Burger, Spaghetti, Gelatine ONLY $7.00	Fish Fried, Siomai, Beef Sautee, Potato Salad ONLY $7.00

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SPECIAL LUNCH	SPECIAL LUNCH	SPECIAL LUNCH
Chicken Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00	Shrimp Fried with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00	Pork Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00
BENTO	BENTO	BENTO
Pork Ginger, Shrimp Chopsuey, Chicken Cutlet, Potato Salad ONLY $7.00	Shrimp Fried, Fish Teriyaki, Sweet & Sour Pork, Gelatine ONLY $7.00	Pork Cutlet, Crab w/ Teriyaki Sauce, Yasaitame, Gelatine ONLY $7.00

Sunday	
SPECIAL LUNCH	BENTO
Tempura w/ Mixed Vegetables with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY $6.00	Tempura w/ Mixed Vegetables, Sweet & Sour Fish, Beef Yakiniku, Potato Salad ONLY $7.00

JAM ATTACK
INDOOR VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

When: April 4, 5, & 6, 2008
Divisions: Men's & Women's
maximum of 12 players per team
Team Capt's Meeting – Monday at 6:00pm
Where: Ada Gym
Cost: $125/team
Prizes: Cash (Amount to be determined by entries), plus assorted PTI prizes
Gatorade for players to be provided by Pacific Trading Company

3-full days of jammin' volleyball fun – spectators welcome!

Gatorade Thirst Quencher
PTI Your connection to the world
PACIFIC TRADING CO., LTD.

For more information, call Elias Rangamar at 664-2502 or Janice Camacho at 323-6560.
This competition is being organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association.

'NMIRF does not conform to the law's requirements'

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Islands Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc., which represents several members of the Retirement Fund in their claims for disability retirement, reported that it appears that the practices of the Retirement Fund staff do not conform to the requirements of the law.

NMPASI legal counsel Jeanne H. Rayphand wrote to the Fund board of trustees, where she cited several concerns such as members who are being denied retirement disability in some cases based on the application of the wrong law.

She said that certification forms that are provided to members to be completed for their application for disability retirement do no require the appropriate certification.

She also underscored that no member eligible for disability retirement should have his application delayed or denied.

"While we may on occasion disagree on the application of the law to a particular case, there is no justification for delaying a member's application or denying his application because the Retirement Fund has failed to carry out its obligation and failed to follow the law," Rayphand said.

She pointed out that the board has not selected physicians or vocational rehabilitation counselors to provide certifications of disability as required by the law and that there are no vocational rehabilitation counselors available to members in the Commonwealth.

"As a result of these practices and conditions, members who are eligible for disability retirement are having their applications delayed or denied," Rayphand said.

Rayphand hopes that the board of "will take action to ensure that claims for disability retirement are processed promptly and without delay and in accordance with the law."

"The Retirement Fund should, and can do, better than that. We urge the Board of Trustees to take immediate action to ensure that applicants for disability retirement are treated equally," Rayphand said.

J.E.T. HOLDINGS COMPANY
dba
J's RESTAURANT
SAIPAN BOWLING CENTER
Daily Lunch Specials
Halo-Halo Specials
League Play
Tournaments
AMUSEMENT GAMES
Poker Machines
Kid's Video Games
J.E.T REALTY
Commercial Building Rental
Consulting Service
and Real Estate
J's Restaurant I & II
P.O. Box 29, Saipan MP 96950

J's Restaurant

Beach Road, San Jose Branch • Tel. 234-6420

Middle Road, Gualo Rai Branch • Tel. 235-8640

Live-fire training on Farallon

The Emergency Management Office said that the U.S. military would be conducting live-fire training on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla for three days next week.

The schedule dates and time are as follow:

- March 31 from 7am to 12am
- April 1 – 04 from 7am to 12am

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, EMO is advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to **stay away** from **this area** during the time and dates indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. ***(EMO)***

Off-island trainings and conferences put on hold

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has ordered a ban on all off island training and conferences of all government departments and autonomous agencies.

In a memorandum Thursday, Fitial also directed departments and agencies to inform Training Director Peter C. Eche of any training and conferences that are requirements of federal grants. He said these special training will be reviewed to check their benefits to the Commonwealth.

"Our intent is not to interfere with legitimate, necessary training and conferences, but to ensure that CNMI training and conferences are meaningful and beneficial," Fitial said in a memorandum Thursday.

The governor said the moratorium on off island training was part of efforts to maximize both local and federal funds.

Last month, Fitial created the Office of the Director of Training, centralizing all employee training within the CNMI government. The centralization includes policy-related employee development training, which is currently under the Office of Personnel Management.

According to the governor, the change is also intended to assist Northern Marianas College to remain focused on its academic and curriculum programs.

Eche was appointed to lead the new agency. He is responsible for approving all government training and training projects, including contracts, travel and associated costs. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

'OWWA did not give telephone numbers of Filipinos on Saipan'

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Overseas Workers Welfare Administration-Saipan did not provide the contact numbers of Filipinos on Saipan to two companies offering unlimited calls from the Philippines for a flat rate of $125 per year.

This according to the Philippine Consulate General on Saipan, which disowned what employees of Prime Management Solution or Prime Marketing are telling Filipinos on Saipan that their telephone numbers were given them by the OWWA office on Saipan.

"The Philippine Consulate General is discrediting what employees from Prime Management Solution or Prime Marketing, reportedly based in Manila, have said that OWWA-Saipan was responsible for giving out to them telephone numbers of Filipinos living on Saipan," it said in a statement in Tagalog.

According to employees of the two companies, interested Filipinos wanting to avail of the service only need to deposit the $125 to the back account of Prime Management Solution or Prime Marketing for their unlimited calls to be activated.

Overseas Filipino workers with legal work status on CNMI, meanwhile, are reminded to renew their OWWA membership contribution amounting to $25 per year. Those who failed to renew for several years shall not be required to pay the accumulated contributions for those past years.

An OWWA member is entitled to the following benefits and services:

1. Life insurance coverage (inclusive of burial benefit):
   - Natural death P 120,000
   - Accidental death P 220,000
2. Disability and dismemberment benefits
3. Total disability benefit
4. Education and training benefits
5. Social services and family welfare assistance
6. Workers assistance and on-site services

For those interested, OWWA-Saipan hotlines are 235-3411/235-6992, while its email is polo@pticom.com or owwa_saipan@yahoo.com.

LA hearing postponed in Miura case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A hearing on whether to throw out an arrest warrant for a Japanese businessman in the 1980s murder of his wife has been postponed until several documents are translated.

In a Thursday order, Superior Court Judge Steven R. Van Sicklen says three exhibits are in Japanese and need to be translated before the hearing.

No new date was not set for the hearing, originally scheduled for April 2.

The 60-year-old Miura was arrested last month in the U.S. territory of Saipan and Los Angeles authorities are seeking his extradition.

In 1981, he was shot in the leg and his wife was shot in the head in Los Angeles. Kazumi Miura, 28, died the following year in Japan. Los Angeles police initially accepted Miura's story of being shot by robbers but later became convinced he conspired with someone to have his wife killed to collect life insurance.

Miura was convicted in Japan of murdering his wife, but that verdict was overturned by the country's high courts 10 years ago.

Kick Butts Day on April 2

The 4th Annual Kick Butts Day march and rally will be held on Wednesday, April 2, from 5pm to 8pm

Organized by the Community Guidance Center and its partners, the Kick Butts Day is a national day of activism that empowers youth to speak up and take action against tobacco use.

"It's a day for youth to stand out, speak up, and seize control in the fight against tobacco. How? By raising awareness about tobacco—how it harms our health and how Big Tobacco targets kids—and supporting strong tobacco control policies," said organizers in a media release

Like the three previous KBD events, this year's event will include participants from the various public and private schools, youth centers, children and youth programs, and various agencies and organizations to promote continuing partnerships for a drug-free CNMI. ***(Mark Rabago)***

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendment of the Saipan Zoning Law and Official Zoning Map (Rezones)

We ask your comments on proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2007 and Official Zoning Maps. The proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law affect many parts of the law including: definitions of terms, exemptions and area of jurisdiction, the types of uses permitted in certain areas (zones), standards (requirements) for temporary uses and roadside merchandise stands, standards for certain uses, building design, signs and lighting, lot line adjustments, subdivisions, road standards, and editorial changes. The proposed amendments to the Official Zoning Map (rezones) are on map sheets 01, 02, 05, 06, 08, 09, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26 and 27.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE TO EXPLAIN THE PROPOSAL:	PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSAL:
Date: April 22,2007	Date: April 29, 2008
Time: 2:00 pm and repeat at 6:30 pm	Time: 6:30 pm
Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe	Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

The proposed amendments and map changes may be viewed at
Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan
Joeten-Kiyu Public Library
Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp (publications page)

After the public hearing, the Zoning Board will make a decision on whether to approve any or all of the changes to the Official Zoning Maps. The Board will also decide whether to recommend any or all of the amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law for adoption by the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office and they must be received at the Zoning Office by 4:30 pm, April 30, 2008. Send written comments via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9663. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2007. /s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

FOOD

From Page 1

Clashes over bread in Egypt killed at least two people last week, and similar food riots broke out in Burkina Faso and Cameroon this month.

But food protests now crop up even in Italy. And while the price of spaghetti has doubled in Haiti, the cost of miso is packing a hit in Japan.

"It's not likely that prices will go back to as low as we're used to," said Abdolreza Abbassian, economist and secretary of the Intergovernmental Group for Grains for the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. "Currently if you're in Haiti, unless the government is subsidizing consumers, consumers have no choice but to cut consumption. It's a very brutal scenario, but that's what it is."

No one knows that better than Eugene Thermilon, 30, a Haitian day laborer who can no longer afford pasta to feed his wife and four children since the price nearly doubled to $0.57 a bag. Their only meal on a recent day was two cans of corn grits.

"Their stomachs were not even full," Thermilon said, walking toward his pink concrete house on the precipice of a garbage-filled ravine. By noon the next day, he still had nothing to feed them for dinner.

Their hunger has had a ripple effect. Haitian food vendor Fabiola Duran Estime, 31, has lost so many customers like Thermilon that she had to pull her daughter, Fyva, out of kindergarten because she can't afford the $20 monthly tuition.

Fyva was just beginning to read.

In the long term, prices are expected to stabilize. Farmers will grow more grain for both fuel and food and eventually bring prices down. Already this is happening with wheat, with more crops to be planted in the U.S., Canada and Europe in the coming year.

However, consumers still face at least 10 years of more expensive food, according to preliminary FAO projections.

Among the driving forces are petroleum prices, which increase the cost of everything from fertilizers to transport to food processing. Rising demand for meat and dairy in rapidly developing countries such as China and India is sending up the cost of grain, used for cattle feed, as is the demand for raw materials to make biofuels.

What's rare is that the spikes are hitting all major foods in most countries at once. Food prices rose 4 percent in the U.S. last year, the highest rise since 1990, and are expected to climb as much again this year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As of December, 37 countries faced food crises, and 20 had imposed some sort of food-price controls.

For many, it's a disaster. The U.N.'s World Food Program says it's facing a $500 million shortfall in funding this year to feed 89 million needy people. On Monday, it appealed to donor countries to step up contributions, saying its efforts otherwise have to be scaled back.

In Egypt, where bread is up 35 percent and cooking oil 26 percent, the government recently proposed ending food subsidies and replacing them with cash payouts to the needy. But the plan was put on hold after it sparked public uproar.

"A revolution of the hungry is in the offing," said Mohammed el-Askalani of Citizens Against the High Cost of Living, a protest group established to lobby against ending the subsidies.

In China, the price hikes are both a burden and a boon.

Per capita meat consumption has increased 150 percent since 1980, so Zhou Jian decided six months ago to switch from selling auto parts to pork. The price of pork has jumped 58 percent in the past year, yet every morning housewives and domestics still crowd his Shanghai shop, and more customers order choice cuts.

The 26-year-old now earns $4,200 a month, two to three times what he made selling car parts. And it's not just pork. Beef is becoming a weekly indulgence.

"The Chinese middle class is starting to change the traditional thought process of beef as a luxury," said Kevin Timberlake, who manages the U.S.-based Western Cattle Company feedlot in China's Inner Mongolia.

At the same time, increased cost of food staples in China threatens to wreak havoc. Beijing has been selling grain from its reserves to hold down prices, said Jing Ulrich, chairwoman of China equities for JP Morgan.

"But this is not really solving the root cause of the problem," Ulrich said. "The cause of the problem is a supply-demand imbalance. Demand is very strong. Supply is constrained. It is as simple as that."

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao says fighting inflation from shortages of key foods is a top economic priority. Inflation reached 7.1 percent in January, the highest in 11 years, led by an 18.2 percent jump in food prices.

Meanwhile, record oil prices have boosted the cost of fertilizer and freight for bulk commodities—up 80 percent in 2007 over 2006. The oil spike has also turned up the pressure for countries to switch to biofuels, which the FAO says will drive up the cost of corn, sugar and soybeans "for many more years to come."

In Japan, the ethanol boom is hitting the country in mayonnaise and miso, two important culinary ingredients, as biofuels production pushes up the price of cooking oil and soybeans.

A two-pound bottle of mayonnaise his risen about 10 percent in two months to as much as 330 yen (nearly $3), said Daishi Inoue, a cook at a Chinese restaurant.

"It's not hurting us much now," he said. "But if prices keep going up, we have no choice but to raise our prices."

Miso Bank, a restaurant in Tokyo's glitzy Ginza district, specializes in food cooked with miso, or soybean paste.

"We expect prices to go up in April all at once," said Miso Bank manager Koichi Oritani. "The hikes would affect our menu. So we plan to order miso in bulk and make changes to the menu."

Italians are feeling the pinch in pasta, with consumer groups staging a one-day strike in September against a food deeply intertwined with national identity. Italians eat an estimated 60 pounds of pasta per capita a year.

The protest was symbolic because Italians typically stock up on pasta, buying multiple packages at a time. But in the next two months pasta consumption dropped 5 percent, said farm lobbyist Rolando Manfredini.

"The situation has gotten even worse," he said.

In decades past, farm subsidies and support programs allowed major grain exporting countries to hold large surpluses, which could be tapped during food shortages to keep prices down. But new trade policies have made agricultural production much more responsive to market demands—putting global food reserves at their lowest in a quarter century.

Without reserves, bad weather and poor harvests have a bigger impact on prices.

"The market is extremely nervous. With the slightest news about bad weather, the market reacts," said economist Abbassian.

That means that a drought in Australia and flooding in Argentina, two of the world's largest suppliers of industrial milk and butter, sent the price of butter in France soaring 37 percent from 2006 to 2007.

Forty percent of escargot, the snail dish, is butter.

"You can do the calculation yourself," said Romain Chapron, president of Croque Bourgogne, which supplies escargot. "It had a considerable effect. It forced people in our profession to tighten their belts to the maximum."

The same climate crises sparked a 21 percent rise in the cost of milk, which with butter makes another famous French food item—the croissant. Panavi, a pastry and bread supplier, has raised retail prices of croissants and pain au chocolat by 6 to 15 percent.

Already, there's a lot of suspicion among consumers.

"They don't understand why prices have gone up like this," said Nicole Watelet, general secretary at the Federation of French Bakeries and Pastry Enterprises. "They think that someone is profiting from this. But it's not us. We're paying." Food costs worldwide spiked 23 percent from 2006 to 2007, according to the FAO. Grains went up 42 percent, oils 50 percent and dairy 80 percent.

Economists say that for the short term, government bailouts will have to be part of the answer to keep unrest at a minimum. In recent weeks, rising food prices sparked riots in the West African nations of Burkina Faso, where mobs torched buildings, and Cameroon, where at least four people died.

But attempts to control prices in one country often have dire effects elsewhere. China's restrictions on wheat flour exports resulted in a price spike in Indonesia this year, according to the FAO. Ukraine and Russia imposed export restrictions on wheat, causing tight supplies and higher prices for importing countries. Partly because of the cost of imported wheat, Peru's military has begun eating bread made from potato flour, a native crop.

"We need a response on a large scale, either the regional or international level," said Brian Halweil of the environmental research organization Worldwatch Institute. "All countries are tied enough to the world food markets that this is a global crisis."

Poorer countries can speed up the adjustment by investing in agriculture, experts say. If they do, farmers can turn high prices into an engine for growth.

But in countries like Burkina Faso, the crisis is immediate.

Days after the riots, Pascaline Ouedraogo wandered the market in the capital, Ouagadougou, looking to buy meat and vegetables. She said a good meal cost 1,000 francs (about $2.35) not long ago. Now she needs twice that.

"The more prices go up, the less there is to meet their needs," she said of her three children, all in secondary school. "You wonder if it's the government or the businesses that are behind the price hikes."

Irene Belem, a 25-year-old with twins, struggles to buy milk, which has gone up 57 percent in recent weeks.

"We knew we were poor before," she said, "but now it's worse than poverty."

$7,901

From Page 1

The next day, the mother went back to the hospital to pick up her bill and arrange for payments. Upon being handed the receipt for her son's hospital bill, she was shocked to see the amount she was being made to pay. A charge she thought was going to amount to no more than $300 actually stated $7,901.82.

That's not the half of it, though. According to the CHC administration office, the amount of $7,901.82 was only an estimate of her son's actual bill.

"This is only an estimate. The patient can actually end up paying more," said a CHC employee, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The mother said she cried over the bill since receiving it.

"I told the hospital staff that we don't have insurance. And I remember one day calling up the hospital asking how much it would cost to get it done," the mother said. She was reportedly told by a hospital staff in mid-July 2007 that the procedure would cost around $250.

She said she did not send her son to the hospital at that time because she was told that there was "only one doctor" who does the procedure.

The two waited it out until March, two weeks after her son's birthday, when the decision to have her son circumcised became final.

"If I had known that it was going to be that much, I wouldn't have gotten it done over here," the mother cried.

The mother and son, who are of Chinese descent, said they would have flown first class to Hong Kong and gotten the boy circumcised over there for "a lot less than this!"

"This is outrageous! I cannot afford this! Tell me who can!" she told the *Saipan Tribune*.

According to the Department of Public Health, all hospital charges have gone up since Dec. 1, 2007.

The department said that they have put out notices in the media letting people know of their new charges.

The mother said she knew nothing about the new charges and demanded a breakdown of her son's hospital bill.

DPH, who used to charge $250 for every 30 minutes in the Operating Room, explained that the boy was billed at $1,467.05, which is more than a 450-percent increase, for every 15 minutes he was in the Operating Room, along with anesthesia and other medications he received throughout his surgery.

DPH said that after Nov. 30, 2007, the new charges applied. "Everybody who came in after that are billed the new charges," said an employee in the CHC billing office.

She added that, "There have been a lot of people coming in complaining about their bill. We have many from the Labor and Delivery Room and Emergency."

According to DPH Chief Financial Officer Esther Muna, "Surgical procedures are charged based on the actual procedure performed plus time spent in the operating room."

She added that "when simple and less-weighted procedures result in a total charge that exceeds what is reasonable for the weighted procedure and there is no mention of a complication in the patient's record, DPH will impose a limited amount that would be charged for the operating room. The patient's case would be reviewed if he meets this criteria."

The worried mother said that DPH should have let her know of the new charges before doing the procedure on her son.

2 STRONG

From Page 1

He did, however, said that the 5.4 magnitude earthquake was the strongest tremor EMO recorded so far this year.

Camacho said no injuries to persons or damage to property has been reported so far in the CNMI due to the earthquake.

Yesterday morning, Rota experienced a similar strength earthquake a little over 24 hours after Thursday's plate-to-plate activity, as an earthquake with preliminary magnitude of 5.3 on the Reichter scale shook the CNMI's northernmost island.

The epicenter of the quake was 10 miles west of Rota, 85 miles south-southwest of Saipan, 80 south-southwest of Tinian, and 155 miles south southwest of Anatahan.

Like the previous day's temblor, yesterday's earthquake did not generate a destructive Pacific-wide tsunami and no tsunami threat was declared in the Marianas.

Camacho said that besides the two earthquakes, the islands also experienced identical 4.7 magnitude earthquakes on Jan. 7 and 13 and a 4.6 magnitude shaker on Jan. 6.

According to EMO, earthquakes are constantly occurring throughout the Mariana Island chain from Guam to Farallon De Pajaros, the northernmost island of the CNMI.

Most of these earthquakes are minor tremors or movements that are not felt by residents of the islands but are recorded in the seismograph instruments at EMO.

The most recent major earthquake that struck the CNMI occurred in August 1993 near Guam registering 8.1 on the Reichter scale. Fortunately, the epicenter was deep and the CNMI only experienced minor damage, but Guam being closer did experience significant damage. The islands of the CNMI sits on the Philippine sea plate, a seismically active region known as the "Ring of Fire" that is being uplifted by the Pacific sea plate.

The EMO, meanwhile, reported that seismicity at Anatahan remains elevated, though it has quieted slightly over the past 72 hours. Elevated seismicity may accompany increased venting of steam, ash, and/or gas by the volcano.

Access to the island may be restricted by the CNMI government. Contact the EMO to get the latest information (322-8001/2/4).

14 Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on 14 beach sites on Saipan and is warning the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until notified.

Affected sites are beaches at the Tanapag Meeting Hall, Central Repair Shop, DPW Channel Bridge, South Puerto Rico Dump, American Memorial Park, Micro Beach, Dai-Ichi drainage, Hafa-Adai Hotel, Garapan Fishing Dock, Garapan Beach Drainage, Sugar Dock, Tank Beach, Hidden Beach, and Unai Dangkulo.

DEQ said that samples collected from these locations were found to contain excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainages every Wednesday. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Repair work on CUC engine nearly done

The repair on Engine No. 5 at Power Plant 1 was in its final stages and was expected to be completed and online yesterday afternoon. However, until such time the repairs are finalized, the power plant will continue to require load shedding due to the lack of available power generation.

As a result of these outages, water services will also be affected in the respective areas identified in the schedule below:

9:00am-11:00am
Feeder 7: Entire Feeder

Lower Base, Tanapag, San Roque, As Matuis Homestead, and Marpi area

11:00am-1:00pm
Kiya 1: Entire Feeder

Southern side of Chalan Kiya, As Terlaje, Northern parts of Fina Sisu, El Toro Dandan, Kanat Tabla, Airport Road, San Vicente, Dandan, Northern Marianas College, Obyan, Laulau, Papago, Botanical Garden south, Lower Dandan, Isley Field, CPA/Airport, and As Perdido

1:00pm-3:00pm
Feeder 4: Entire Feeder

Portions of Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capitol Hill, Wireless Ridge, Denni, Agag, As Teo, Kagman, and portions of Papago

3:00pm-5:00pm
Feeder 2: Entire Feeder

CPA Seaport, Boating Safety, American Memorial Park, Portions of Lower Base, Puerto Rico and Garapan (Micro Beach Hotels), Duty Free area and Bank of Guam along Beach Road

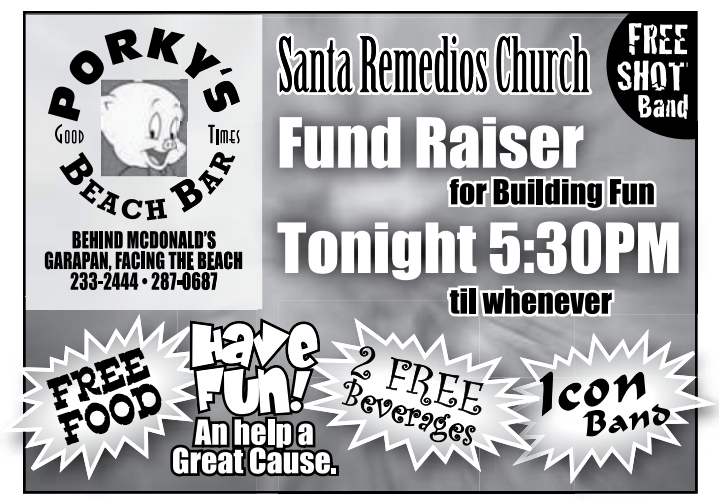
5:00pm-7:00pm
Kiya 2: Entire Feeder

San Antonio, Afetnas, Southern Side of Koblerville and As Gonno

7:00pm-9:00pm
Kiya 4: Entire Feeder

Chalan Kiya Substation, San Jose, Susupe, and Chalan Kanoa Post Office

As soon as the CUC is capable to provide sufficient electrical generation to meet the island's demand, this schedule will no longer be required. This schedule assumes that no additional engine problems occur during this emergency repair, and it may be altered as required by the CUC. ***(CUC)***



CRIME OF THE WEEK

Youth center burglary

Crime Stoppers is asking the community for more information on any person(s) responsible for the burglary and theft incident at the Man'hoben (Youth) Center in Chalan Kanoa. Based on preliminary investigation, the incident was reported on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, at 2:58pm. Police learned that the center was last secured on Thursday, March 20, at 5pm. Stolen items included two golf clubs, several rolls of toilet paper, several hula-hoops, and other items.

Anyone having information about this crime, please call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards up to $1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used. All calls remain anonymous. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

MAKE-A-WISH
Visit us at 865 S. Marine Dr., Orlean Pacific Plaza Ste. 104 Tamuning, Guam 96913
Tel: (671) 649-WISH • Fax: (671) 646-6293
Email: mawfguam@ite.net • www.wish.org
Office Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm, M-F daily
Saipan Tribune

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670
Fax. (670) 234-9021 • Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, April 2, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room in Garapan, Saipan. The Public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
II. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
III. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
V. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**
   A. 2005 project funding
   B. Project updates
VI. **HOUSING PROGRAMS**
   A. Section 8 Updates
VII. **MORTGAGE CREDIT PROGRAMS**
   A. Loans for Concurrence
   B. VA Loan Matters
   C. SB 16-25
VIII. **FIELD OFFICE REPORTS**
IX. **FISCAL MATTERS**
   A. Financial Statements
   B. SK II properties
   C. Lot 003 D 10
   D. FY 2006 and 2007 audit updates
X. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
XI. **OTHER MATTERS**
   A. Lot 003 D 16
   B. CPD citizen participation plan
   C. Turnkey development proposal
XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

NOTE: Pursuant to PL 8-41, Section 13(6) and (7), some discussion of the above may be under Executive Session.

/s/ **MANUEL A. SABLAN**
Chairman of the Board

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Department of Public Health
Women, Infants and Children Program
Navy Hill Bldg N-25

WIC

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).

The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for it's patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 89

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Bad judgment

It's hard to imagine a refugee from Iraq more deserving of residence in the United States than Saman Kareem Ahmad. The 38-year-old Kurd lost his family during Saddam Hussein's genocidal chemical attack against his home town of Halabja in 1988; for the last several years, his de facto family has been the U.S. Marine Corps, for which he bravely served as a translator in Fallujah. Driven out of Iraq by death threats in 2006, he was admitted to the United States under a special visa program for translators and granted asylum. He now provides instruction for Marines headed to Iraq from the base in Quantico, Va.

Yet, as recounted by The Post's Karen DeYoung on Sunday, Mr. Ahmad's application for permanent residence in the United States was denied last month by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The pretext was patently absurd: Mr. Ahmad had once served in the militia of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), which USCIS officials deemed an "undesignated terrorist organization" because it had fought against the Iraqi government — the government, that is, of Saddam Hussein. Left out of the USCIS calculations were the facts that the KDP is one of the few unambiguously pro-American forces in Iraq; that the group does not appear on any U.S. government list of terrorists; and that the KDP's military activities against Saddam were encouraged and materially supported by the United States.

The deputy director of Citizenship and Immigration Services, Jonathan "Jock" Scharfen, acknowledges that his agency's decision "does not appear to make much common sense." Until recently, language in the Immigration and Nationality Act virtually compelled a finding that the KDP and similarly pro-American organizations were "terrorists"; legislation allowing such groups to be cleared was passed in December, but a review of the KDP has not been completed. In the meantime, Mr. Scharfen said, the case of Mr. Ahmad is "on hold." But the homeland security secretary is empowered to grant waivers to individuals; Secretary Michael Chertoff should act immediately in this instance.

The larger story here concerns the Bush administration's shoddy treatment of Iraqis who have put their lives on the line to support U.S. forces during the last five years. Only 50 visas per year for Iraqi and Afghan translators were allocated beginning in 2006; the number was increased to 500 for this fiscal year, but will revert to 50 in 2009, even though 648 translators had applications pending as of December. Not every Iraqi who has helped the United States needs to be admitted to this country or be granted a green card. But cases such as that of Mr. Ahmad shame this country.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Validity of Article 18 (5)(c) of NMI Constitution

Editor's Note: The following is text of the opinion issued by the author in response to a request by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

By HOWARD P. WILLENS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Howard P. Willens is special legal counsel to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

First of two parts

You have asked me the legal issues raised by Article 18 (5)(c) of the CNMI Constitution restricting the right of persons who are not of Northern Marianas Descent as defined in Article 12 of the Constitution to vote on amendments to Article 12. In particular, you have inquired whether such a restriction on the right to vote of United States citizens otherwise qualified to vote in the Commonwealth would violate any provision of the United States Constitution. This memorandum summarizes my conclusions on this question.[1]

Summary of conclusions

The legal issues raised by Article 18 (5)(c) need to be considered in light of Section 805 of the Covenant and Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution. Under these provisions, which have been upheld by the federal courts, the Commonwealth is entitled to limit the right to own land in the Commonwealth to persons who fall under the definition of Northern Marianas Descent. Based on the constitutionality of Article 12, supporters of the voting restrictions imposed by Article 18 (5)(c) contend that these limitations will be similarly upheld by the federal courts. I have concluded to the contrary and believe that this limitation of the right to vote would be invalidated by the courts if it were challenged under the Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. The constitutional right of United States citizens to vote has repeatedly been given the highest priority by the United States Supreme Court and there are no court decisions upholding restrictions such as those imposed by Article 18 (5)(c) of the CNMI Constitution.

Background

Section 805 of the Covenant authorized the Commonwealth to impose restrictions on land ownership. The representatives of both the United States and the Northern Marianas people agreed early in the negotiations that such restrictions would be desirable, if they were permissible under the United States Constitution. In its final form Section 805 states that such restrictions were necessary "in view of the importance of land for the culture and traditions of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and in order to protect them against exploitation and to promote their economic advancement and self-sufficiency." By way of a compromise between the negotiating parties, Section 805 *requires* such restrictions "until twenty-five years after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement [2011]," after which the Commonwealth is free to continue, amend, or terminate such restrictions on the ownership and sale of permanent and long-term interests in land.

Section 805 of the Covenant was implemented by Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution, drafted by the Constitutional Convention in 1976 and approved by the Northern Marianas people by referendum in 1977. According to the Analysis of the Constitution approved by the Convention,

"The Convention followed three basic principles in implementing the restrictions on land alienation mandated by the Covenant. First, the Convention used only those restrictions necessary to the accomplishment of the purpose that underlies the Covenant. Second, the Convention avoided the use of any racial or ethnic classification to accomplish its purpose. Its classifications are based on neutral principles of birth, domicile, incorporation and other essential attributes. Third, the Convention spent a great deal of time and effort to find the least restrictive means of accomplishing its purpose."[2]

Section 4 of Article 12 of the Constitution defines Northern Marianas Descent as follows:

"A person of Northern Marianas descent is a person who a citizen or national of the United States and who is of at least one-quarter Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian blood or a combination thereof or an adopted child of a person of Northern Marianas descent if adopted while under the age of eighteen years. For purposes of determining Northern Marianas descent, a person shall be considered to be a full-blooded Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian if that person was born or domiciled in the Northern Mariana Islands by 1950 and was a citizen of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands before the termination of the Trusteeship with respect to the Commonwealth."

Shortly after the Convention completed its work, a debate developed among legal commentators whether such provisions were permissible under the United States Constitution.[3]

After extended litigation in the Commonwealth regarding the validity and scope of Article 12, the constitutional question was resolved by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 1992.[4] According to the court: "This case requires us to determine

See VALIDITY on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

VALIDITY

From Page 6

whether the constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the laws limits the ability of the United States and the Commonwealth to impose race-based restrictions on the acquisition of permanent and long-term interests in Commonwealth land." 958 F.2d at 1451. The court rejected the contention that Covenant Section 805 and Article 12 violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In so ruling, the court relied on principles first articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court in a series of cases that came to be known as the Insular Cases, decided after Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico were acquired by the United States after the Spanish-American War in 1898. This analysis required a determination by the court whether Congress possessed the legal authority to limit the application of a particular constitutional right in the Commonwealth by its approval of the Covenant. According to the court, "In the territorial context, the definition of a basic and integral freedom must narrow to incorporate the shared beliefs of diverse cultures, Thus, the asserted constitutional guarantee against discrimination in the acquisition of long-term interests in land applied only if the guarantee is fundamental in this *international* sense." *Id.* at 1460.

The Ninth Circuit decided that the right to have equal access to land acquisition was not fundamental under this analysis and Congress therefore had the power to approve Section 805 of the Covenant. The court emphasized that "land in the Commonwealth is a scarce and precious resource" and that "the vital role native ownership of land plays in the preservation of NMI social and cultural stability [cannot] be underestimated." *Id.* at 1461. The court relied heavily on the 1976 Analysis of the Constitution and the article by Convention counsel in concluding that "land is principally important in the Commonwealth not for its economic value but for its stabilizing effect on the natives' social system." The court summarized this portion of its holding by declaring: "The land alienation restrictions are properly viewed as an attempt, albeit a paternalistic one, to prevent the inhabitants from selling their cultural anchor for short-term economic gain, thereby protecting local culture and values and preventing exploitation of the inexperienced islanders at the hands of resourceful and comparatively wealthy outside investors." *Id.* The court also concluded that it would be "impractical and anomalous" to deny the United States the authority to approve the challenged provisions and thereby "frustrate the mutual interests that led to the Covenant." *Id.* at 1462.

Article 18(5)(c) was approved by the Commonwealth voters in 1999. It limited the right of otherwise qualified CNMI voters to vote on amendments to Article 12 if they did not meet the definition of Northern Marianas Descent set forth in Article 12. No amendment to Article 12 has been on the ballot since the enactment of these voting restrictions. However, in recent years several legislative initiatives have been discussed in the Commonwealth Legislature which would amend Article 12 and during the past few months there has been discussion of initiatives that might be considered at a special election in 2008. As a result, the Commonwealth Election Commission has developed special registration requirements that would enable the Commission to comply with the voting restrictions of Article 18 (5)(c) if that became necessary. They have prepared an affidavit by which voters could swear under penalty of perjury that they are of Northern Marianas Descent. The Commission would permit all qualified voters—whether of Northern Marianas Descent or not—to vote on any proposed amendments to Article 12. It would, however, mark the ballots of one group of voters (presumably to non-NMD voters) so that those votes could readily be excluded if a federal or CNMI court upheld the voting restrictions. The Commission was seeking to avoid litigation, if possible, and thought that the proposed registration procedures might further that objective because of the possibility (and perhaps the likelihood) that the votes of the non-NMD voters would not be determinative and therefore resolution of the constitutional issue would not be necessary.

Discussion

Supporters of Article 18 (5)(c) understandably rely on the court's opinion upholding Covenant Section 805 and Article 12 as providing support for these voting restrictions, which also depend on the definition of Northern Marianas Descent. If only persons of Northern Marianas Descent can own land without restriction in the Commonwealth under Article 12, the proponents of Article 18 (5)(c) contend that only voters of Northern Marianas Descent should be able to vote on proposed amendments to Article 12. There are two major difficulties with this line of argument: (1) The Ninth Circuit decision addressed the specific question before it relating to the power of the federal government to authorize restrictions on land ownership and provides no precedent for limitations on voting rights imposed by the CNMI Government; and (2) The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled in several different contexts that restrictions on the right to vote violate the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution.

1. The Limitations of the Ninth Circuit Opinion on Land Alienation

As summarized above, the central question before the Ninth Circuit was whether the United States had the authority by approving the Covenant to enable the Commonwealth to develop and enforce limitations on the ownership of land with respect to certain members of the community. With respect to the current question, the validity of the voting limitations imposed by Article 18 (5)(c), there is no involvement (and certainly no approval) by the federal government. Accordingly, there is no room for application of the Insular Cases analysis to this question. The Commonwealth's right to impose such voting restrictions will be no greater, or no less, than the right of the States or other political entities in the United States. The decision of the Ninth Circuit upholding Section 805 and Article 12 has no persuasive force in assessing the constitutionality of these voting restrictions.

The U.S. Supreme Court has held that the right to vote is "fundamental," because it is a right that "is preservative of other basic civil and political rights." *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, 562 (1964). Because the right to vote is fundamental, "any alleged impairment of the right should be subjected to 'strict scrutiny' by the Court"—the most rigorous test used by the Court is assessing the constitutionality of legislative provisions.[5] As Professor Rotunda stated in his treatise on constitutional law, the right to vote is "the right that is preservative of all our rights and at the heart of democracy."[6]

The fact that a majority of the Commonwealth's voters approved this restriction on the right to vote has no legal significance. As the Supreme Court said in *Lucas v. Forty-Fourth General Assembly*, 377 U.S. 713, 736 (1964): "An individual's constitutionally protected right to cast an equally weighted vote cannot be denied even by a vote of a majority of a State's electorate, if the apportionment scheme adopted by the voters fails to measure up to the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause. Manifestly, the fact that an apportionment plan is adopted in a popular referendum is insufficient to sustain its constitutionality or to induce a court of equity to refuse to act."

2. The Constitutionality of the Commonwealth's Voting Restrictions

There are three different constitutional theories that courts are likely to consider in evaluating this provision of the CNMI Constitution: (1) Application of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to State limitations on the right to vote on non-racial grounds; (2) Application of the Fifteenth Amendment to State limitations on the right to vote that are racial in nature; and (3) Application of the Privileges and Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to State differentiation of classes of citizens based on their length of residence in the State…

A. Validity of Limitations on the Right to Vote on Non-Racial Grounds

As emphasized above, the Supreme Court has stressed the fundamental nature of the right to vote. In the leading case of *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356, 370 (1886), the Court stated that though the right to vote is "not regarded strictly as a natural right, but as a privileges merely conceded by society, according to its will, under certain circumstances, nevertheless it is a fundamental political right, because preservative of all rights." This central principle has been reaffirmed by federal courts on numerous occasions for more than a century since this landmark ruling. It has been relied upon by occasions for more than a century since this landmark ruling. It has been relied upon by the Court to invalidate State laws that seek to deny the vote to classes of voters and is the basis on which Article 18 (5)(c) is almost certain to be declared in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

In *Hill v. Stone*, 421 U.S. 289 (1975), the Court struck down a Texas law that forbade property tax increases unless a majority of the property owners agreed. The Texas law provided for a "dual box election procedure" to be used in the State's local bond elections. Under this procedure, all persons owning taxable property voted in one box, and all other registered voters (the none-property owners) cast their ballots in a separate box. The results in both boxes were tabulated and the bond issue would pass only if it were approved by a majority vote in both boxes. The Court held that the Texas law created a classification that unconstitutionally disfranchised persons otherwise qualified to vote, solely because they had not listed any property for taxation. According to the Court, as long as the election is not none of "special interest," any classification restricting the franchise on grounds other than residence, age, and citizenship cannot stand unless the district or State can demonstrate that the classification serves a compelling State interest. The bond election, affecting only the property owners, was not a "special interest" election, even though the servicing of the debt would be paid entirely out of property taxes. Instead, the Court held that the election was a matter of "general interest" because it affected more than the property owners.[7]

Other State efforts to limit voting to property owners have been invalidated by the Supreme Court as a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. In *Cipriano v. City of Houma*, 395 U.S. 701 (1969), the Court emphasized that the bonds involved were intended to finance extension and improvement of the city's utility system and that the operation of a utility system obviously affects both property owners and non-property owners. Similarly, in *City of Phoenix v. Kolodiejski*, 399 U.S. 204 (1970), the Court reasoned that all city residents, whether property owners or not, had a common interest in the facilities that the bond issue would make available, and they would all be substantially affected by the outcome of the election, both in terms of the benefits provided and the obligations incurred.[8]

In a different context, the Supreme Court also relied on the Equal Protection Clause to invalidate a New York law that limited the right to vote in board of education elections to persons who owned or leased taxable real property in the school district or who had children enrolled in the public schools. *Kramer v. Union Free School Dist. No. 15*, 395 U.S. 621 (1969). The Court acknowledged that the school district was supported by a property tax, but stressed that not only parents and property owners were interested in the conduct of local school affairs. The law violated equal protection because it had impermissibly excluded many persons with an interest in the decisions of the school board.

The limitation on the right to vote embodied in Article 18 (5)(c) based on the definition of Northern Marianas Descent violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment as interpreted by the Supreme Court. In the absence of any property tax in the Commonwealth, there is no distinction here between persons who pay property taxes and those who do not. Furthermore, some persons of Northern Marianas Descent may not hold or lease any property, whereas many persons not of Northern Marianas Descent do lease residential or commercial properties. Most importantly, all residents of the Commonwealth have an interest in the provisions of Article 12 and their impact on the overall economy of the CNMI. The disenfranchisement of the U.S. citizens in the Commonwealth who are not of Northern Marianas Descent cannot be rationalized in any manner that immunizes this limitation from successful challenges under the Equal Protection Clause.

To be continued

[1] The Office of the Attorney General agrees with the conclusions in this memorandum. We wish to acknowledge the contribution to our legal analysis of Professor Ronald D. Rotunda, who was asked by the Attorney General to examine this issue on a pro bono basis in 2006. Professor Rotunda is one of the most distinguished constitutional law scholars in the United States. He is presently a University Professor and Professor of Law at George Mason University in Virginia, after teaching for many years at the University of Illinois. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College and a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School, where he served as a member of the Harvard Law Review. He has coauthored the most widely used book on legal ethics and is the author of a leading course book on constitutional law, *Modern Constitutional Law* (West Publishing Co., 8th ed. 2007). He has served in a variety of important advisory positions in the United States and foreign countries, has authored several other books, and has written more than 200 articles in various law reviews, journals, newspapers, and books in this country and in Europe.

[2] Analysis of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (December 6, 1976), p. 164.

[3] Anticipating legal challenge, counsel for the 1976 Convention published an article that discussed the Convention's work and, in particular, set forth the legal rationale under which the land alienation provisions of the Covenant and the Constitution should be upheld by the Supreme Court. Willens and Siemer, "The Constitution of the Norhern Mariana Islands: Constitutional Principles and Innovation in a Pacific Setting." 65 *Georgetown Law Journa*l 1373-1481 (1977). Other writers disagreed. Branch, "The Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands: Does a Different Cultural Setting Justify Different Constitutional Standards?" 9 *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy* 35-67 (1980); Leary, The Northern Marianas Covenant and American Territorial Relations (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, 1980).

[4] *Wabol v. Villacrusis*, 898 F.2d 1381 (9th Cir. 1990), as amended, 908 F.2d 411, as amended 958 F.2d 1450, *cert. Denied sub nom., Philippine Goods, Inc. v. Wabol*, 506 U.S. 1027 (1992)

[5] 4 Ronald D. Rotunda & John E. Nowak, Treatise on Constitional Law ¶18.3 (West Group, 3rd ed. 1998).

[6] Id. at ¶20.47.

[7] The only election that the Supreme Court has held to be a "special interest" election was one involving water districts. In Salyer Land Co. v. Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District, 410 U.S. 719 (1973), the Court held that a water district created for the purpose of acquiring, storing, and distributing water for agricultural purposes could constitutionally have a board of directors selected by an election in which votes were allocated according to the assessed value of each voter's land. Because of its "special limited purpose and of the disproportionate effect of its activities on landowners as a group," the Court held that the water district election was of sufficient "special interest" to a single group that the franchise could constitutionally be denied to others." Id. at 728.

[8] See also Quinn v. Millsap, 491 U.S. 95 (1989) (invalidating under the Equal Protection Clause a provision of the Missouri Constitution limiting the right to vote to real property owners the appointment of members to the "board of freeholders" charged with the duty of drafting a reorganization plan for city and country government).

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°

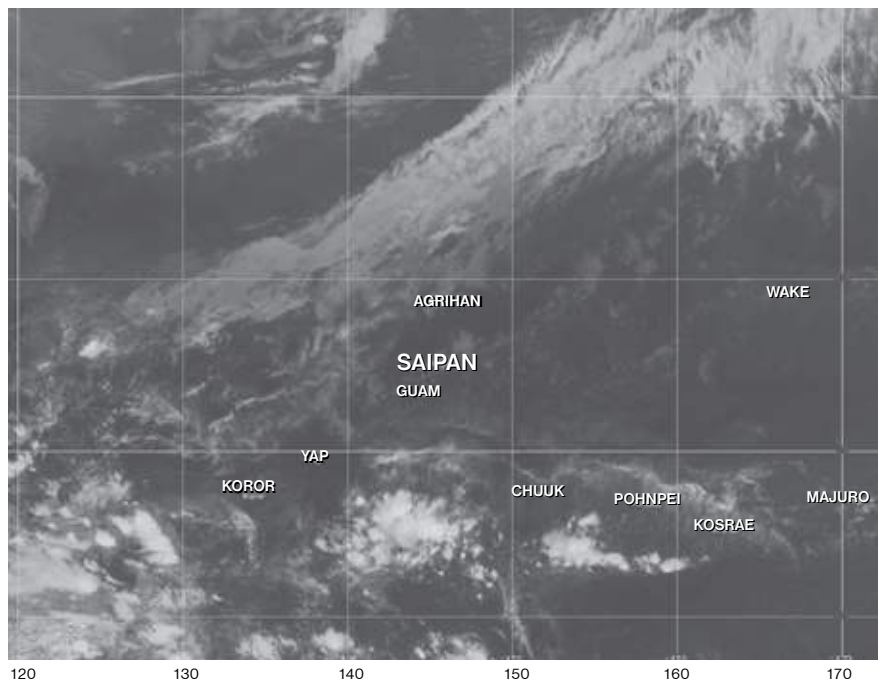
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼75
Palau	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼73
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲70	▼61
Beijing	Showers	▲43	▼37
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲81	▼70
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲85	▼72
London	Showers	▲50	▼41
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼52
Manila	T'Showers	▲90	▼78
Melbourne	Showers	▲59	▼43
Miami	T'showers	▲83	▼70
New York	Partly Sunny	▲44	▼33
Osaka	Cloudy	▲51	▼42
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲52	▼43
Pusan	Rain	▲48	▼47
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲65	▼47
Salem	Showers	▲48	▼32
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲61	▼42
Seoul	Rain	▲50	▼37
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲54	▼43
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲54	▼32

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, MAR. 28, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front stretches from 25N154E to 21N148E then continues as a shear line to 18N141E then to 17N130E and farther west. extensive cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 400 miles northwest of this boundary. Strong trade-wind convergence is creating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 3N and 8N from 140E to 150E. Trade-wind convergence is generating clouds and a few showers in the Marshall Islands within 120 miles of a line from 7N167E to 7N175E to 9N180, including Kwajalein and Majuro. An old shear line reaches westward from 18N180 to end at 18N176E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring along and up to 120 miles north of this boundary.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
1:48AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
6:24AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
11:04AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
7:13PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:15AM	6:29PM
Sunday	6:14AM	6:29PM
Monday	6:13AM	6:29PM
Tuesday	6:13AM	6:29PM
Wednesday	6:12AM	6:30PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:56PM**	11:13AM
Sunday	12:47AM	12:06PM
Monday	1:36AM	1:01PM
Tuesday	2:22AM	1:56PM
Wednesday	3:05AM	2:51PM

**Preceding Day

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 27, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:40am	11:25am	Daily

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Guam-Hongkong

CO 909	6:50pm	9:35pm	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	10:35pm	5:15am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Family Worship
3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at Parsonage
7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service,
Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

MARCH 29, 1999

Garment labor capped
Under imminent threat of a federal takeover, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has signed a controversial bill into law imposing an absolute cap on the number of workers in the garment industry in yet another bid to dampen efforts to apply US labor and immigration laws in CNMI. After years of uncontrolled entry of foreign labor, the legislation finally sets at 15,727 the total number of aliens that will be allowed to work in the garment sector from management positions down to line workers.

Agencies given free hand on cuts
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has left to department heads and mayors the decision whether implement salary cuts or reduction in manhours to help the cash-strapped government cope with a lower spending package for Fiscal 2000. The Tenorio administration is planning to submit approximately $210 million proposed budget, of which an estimated $4 million would come from public land leases.

Trade zone wants environmentally safe companies
CNMI's Free Trade Zone must only attract environmentally friendly businesses to protect the island's natural beauty and not jeopardize the Northern Marianas tourism economy, said Bob Jones, chairman of the FTZ Committee. The CNMI government hopes to attract capital intensive, computer and machine-driven type business operations with a minimum number of skilled higher-paid foreign workers in the Free Trade Zone. Likewise, these businesses must have training programs for U.S. citizens and local residents.

MARCH 29, 2000

AGO unfazed by probe threat
The Attorney General's Office will be ready to face any investigation into its recent actions should the House of Representatives press ahead with a planned oversight hearing. But acting Attorney General Herb Soll dismissed allegations leveled by Rep. Stanley T. Torres of "selective prosecution" and "retaliation" against local residents challenging the AGO's legal authority.

Construction sector injects $36M into NMI economy
Despite decline in numbers of foreign investors who express interest in pouring fresh capital into the CNMI, hundreds of construction activities in the Northern Marianas contributed close to $36 million to local economy in 1999. The amount represents 386 construction proposals approved by the Department of Public Works' Safety Code Division last year. CNMI enjoyed additional $57 million in fresh capital from the construction sector in 1998, although the amount is lower than the previous year's $80 million.

Crop insurance mulled to protect NMI farmers
Local farmers will continue to take a conservative approach on vegetable production unless measures are put in place to protect them from potential financial losses, according to Commonwealth Development Authority Executive Director Marylou S. Ada. CDA is currently advocating the institution of a crop and fishing insurance service in the Northern Marianas to address concerns raised by local farmers and fishermen who have remained skeptic toward expansion.

MARCH 29, 2001

NMI funds from tobacco settlement deal in danger
The Attorney General's Office warned that the Commonwealth will lose millions from the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement if it fails to come up with legislation requiring manufacturers to deposit specific amount of money into qualified escrow funds. AGO consumer counsel David Lochabay alarmed House of Representatives Health and Welfare Committee Chair Malua T. Peter on the proposed 30-day notice posted by MSA states and territories regarding the 1999 Non-Participating Manufacturers Statutes.

Continental eyes increased nonstop flights from Japan
Counting on the economic rebound in Asia, Continental Airlines is eyeing the deployment of more nonstop flights between islands in Micronesia and Japan to meet growing demands for airline seats. Continental Micronesia President Bill Meehan said the carrier had to reduce the number of airline seats deployed between Asian countries and islands in the Marianas due to the corresponding drop in passenger haul.

Business

FDA probes Merck drug and suicides

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Food and Drug Administration said Thursday it is investigating a possible link between Merck's best-selling Singulair and suicide.

FDA said it is reviewing a handful of reports involving mood changes, suicidal behavior and suicide in patients who have taken the popular allergy and asthma drug.

With sales of $4.3 billion last year, Singulair is used by millions of patients in the U.S, according to Merck. First approved in 1998, it's part of a class of asthma and allergy drugs that includes AstraZeneca's Accolate and Critical Therapeutics's Zyflo.

Merck officials stressed that the FDA's inquiry is based on reports, not clinical studies—which are the standard tool for evaluating drug safety. The company said none of the 11,000 patients enrolled in 40 Singulair trials has committed suicide.

"We have no indication that anything about the mechanism of Singulair is consistent with these events," said George Philip, director of research and product development. "But because suicide is a life-threatening event we thought it was important to provide this information in the product label."

"Patients should not stop taking Singulair before talking to their doctor," FDA said in its statement, adding that doctors should monitor patients for suicidal behavior and mood changes.

FDA said it asked the Whitehouse, N.J.-based company to dig deeper into its data on Singulair for evidence of possible links to suicide. The agency said it has not established a "causal relationship" between Merck's drug and suicidal behavior. An agency spokeswoman said the review was prompted by three to four suicide reports it received before October.

Crude oil advances on supply concerns

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil futures shot back above $107 a barrel Thursday after the bombing of an Iraqi oil pipeline diverted investors' attention away from a stabilizing U.S. dollar.

Retail gas prices, meanwhile, inched up overnight while diesel prices slipped.

The bombing of a key Iraqi oil pipeline Thursday morning appeared to cut oil exports from the southern oil city of Basra, despite oil officials' statements to the contrary. Dow Jones Newswires reported that exports from southern Iraqi terminals have been reduced to about 1.2 million barrels a day from a normal rate of 1.56 million barrels a day.

"We're going to be getting less oil because of the explosion," said James Cordier, founder of OptionSellers.com, a Tampa, Fla., trading firm.

For traders, the big factor is that Iraqi oil supplies were cut by a deliberate act of terrorism, Cordier said. That raises the prospect of more attacks, and less oil.

Light, sweet crude for May delivery rose $1.68 to settle at $107.58 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after earlier rising as high as $108.22. Crude futures, also aided earlier in the week by a flagging U.S. dollar, are up 6.6 percent since Monday.

Investment firms tap Fed for billions

WASHINGTON (AP)—Big Wall Street investment companies have jumped all over the Federal Reserve's unprecedented offer to obtain emergency loans, borrowing more than doubled than in the program's debut week.

Those firms averaged $32.9 billion in daily borrowing over the past week from the new lending program, compared with $13.4 billion the previous week, the central bank reported Thursday. The program, which began last Monday, is part of the Fed's effort to aid the financial system.

On Wednesday alone, lending reached $37 billion.

The Fed, for the first time, agreed on March 16 to let big investment houses temporarily get emergency loans directly from the central bank. This mechanism, similar to one available for commercial banks for years, will continue for at least six months. It was the broadest use of the Fed's lending authority since the 1930s.

Last week, Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers and Morgan Stanley said they had begun to test the new lending mechanism. The Fed does not release the identity of the borrowers using the facility.

The Fed created a way for investment firms to have regular access to a source of short-term cash. This lending facility is seen as similar to the Fed's "discount window" for banks. Commercial banks and investment companies pay 2.5 percent in interest for overnight loans from the Fed.

Nation

Gates orders inventory of US nukes

WASHINGTON (AP)—Defense Secretary Robert Gates has ordered a full inventory of all nuclear weapons and related materials after the mistaken delivery of ballistic missile fuses to Taiwan, the Pentagon said Thursday.

Gates told officials with the Air Force, Navy and Defense Logistics Agency to assess inventory control procedures for the materials and to submit a report within 60 days.

Earlier this week, Gates directed Navy Adm. Kirkland H. Donald to take charge of a full investigation of the delivery mistake in which four cone-shaped electrical fuses used in intercontinental ballistic missile warheads were shipped to the Taiwanese instead of the helicopter batteries they had ordered.

It was the second nuclear-related mistake involving the military that has been revealed in recent months. In August an Air Force B-52 bomber was mistakenly armed with six nuclear-tipped cruise missiles and flown from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., to Barksdale Air Force Base, La. At the time, the pilot and crew were unaware they had nuclear arms aboard.

The electrical fuses were delivered in fall 2006, but the military did not fully realize the gravity of the blunder until last week. The revelation sparked sharp protests from China and forced President Bush to acknowledge the error in a phone call Wednesday with Chinese President Hu Jintao.

While the shipment did not contain nuclear materials, the error is particularly sensitive because China vehemently opposes U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. U.S. officials were quick to say that the incident did not suggest any change in policies toward Taiwan arms sales.

But China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said, in a statement posted on the agency's Web site, that China had sent a protest to Washington expressing "strong displeasure."

He said China demanded the U.S. investigate the matter and report back to China to "eliminate the negative effects and disastrous consequences created by this incident."

Cops: Mom killed 2 before campus threat

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—A mother killed her two children and later went to the nearby college she attended and brandished a gun Thursday before handing the weapon to a health counselor, police said.

The threat at the University of Louisville ended with no injuries about half an hour after it began, but police who were then asked by school officials to check on the children found them dead with gunshot wounds.

Gail Lynn Coontz, 37, is charged with murder in the deaths of 14-year-old Greg Coontz and 10-year-old Nikki Coontz, said Louisville police Officer Phil Russell.

Gail Coontz was in custody at the University of Louisville hospital but was expected to be transferred to jail, Russell said.

The woman was also charged with one count of terroristic threatening for pointing a handgun at an officer, university police Maj. Kenny Brown said. The woman gave her handgun to a counselor at the health services building, he said.

"When we were able to open the door and go in, the student and the counselor were both sitting on the couch," Brown said.

The children were shot sometime in the past day, Russell said, not citing a motive.

They were probably shot in their sleep, having been found "in the sleeping position" said Jo-Ann Farmer, chief deputy coroner for Jefferson County.

ACROSS THE NATION

2 dead, 2 hurt in Ga. hospital shooting

COLUMBUS, Ga. (AP)—A man went to a west Georgia hospital where his mother had died and shot three people, killing two, before police shot and wounded him, authorities said. A male nurse was among the dead at Doctors Hospital, and a secretary was in critical condition, Columbus Police Chief Ricky Boren said. Both were shot on the hospital's fifth floor. A plainclothes officer responding to a call of shots fired saw man leaving the hospital shoot a bystander in the head, Boren said. The officer followed the suspect to another part of the parking deck, where the suspect opened fire on police, the chief said. The man was in satisfactory condition, police said. The shooter's name was not released. His mother apparently died at the hospital of natural causes, the chief said.

Kan. City man guilty of killing 6 women

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—A judge convicted a man Thursday of killing six women whose bodies were dumped in an area frequented by prostitutes and drug dealers. Terry Blair, 46, was found guilty of six counts of first-degree murder in the 2004 slayings. He had agreed to be tried before a judge instead of jury in return for prosecutors agreeing not to pursue the death penalty. Prosecutors described Blair as calculating and determined to kill as many prostitutes as he could. Two of the women had been strangled, but the causes of death of the other women could not be determined because their bodies had decomposed so badly. Blair also had been charged in three rapes and an assault that involved four victims who survived their attacks.

Parents pick prayer over docs; girl dies

WESTON, Wis. (AP)—Police are investigating an 11-year-old girl's death from an undiagnosed, treatable form of diabetes after her parents chose to pray for her rather than take her to a doctor. An autopsy showed Madeline Neumann died Sunday of diabetic ketoacidosis, a condition that left too little insulin in her body, Everest Metro Police Chief Dan Vergin said. She had probably been ill for about a month, suffering symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, excessive thirst, loss of appetite and weakness, the chief said Wednesday, noting that he expects to complete the investigation by Friday and forward the results to the district attorney. The girl's mother, Leilani Neumann, said that she and her family believe in the Bible and that healing comes from God.

Woman says TSA forced piercings removal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Texas woman who said she was forced to remove a nipple ring with pliers in order to board an airplane called Thursday for an apology by federal security agents and a civil rights investigation. Hamlin, 37, said she was trying to board a flight from Lubbock to Dallas on Feb. 24 when she was scanned by a female TSA agent with a handheld detector that beeped when it passed in front of Hamlin's chest, the Dallas-area resident said. Hamlin said she told the woman she was wearing nipple piercings. The women then called over her male colleagues, one of whom said she would have to remove the jewelry, Hamlin said. Hamlin said she could not remove them and asked whether she could instead display her pierced breasts in private to the female agent. But several other male officers told her she could not board her flight until the jewelry was out, she said. She was taken behind a curtain and managed to remove one bar-shaped piercing but had trouble with the second, a ring.

Asia

Woman confesses to China plane attack

BEIJING (AP)—A 19-year-old woman has confessed to attempting to hijack and crash a Chinese passenger plane that had to be diverted earlier this month after suspicious liquid was found on board, the official Xinhua News Agency said Thursday.

Xinhua said the woman confessed to a "terrorist" attempt on the March 7 flight to Beijing from Urumqi, the capital of China's Muslim Xinjiang region. The flight was diverted to Lanzhou, in western Gansu province, after one or more passengers were found with suspicious liquids.

The woman is from China's Turkic Muslim Uighur minority, Xinhua said, and officials have called the attack part of a terror campaign to turn the region into an independent nation called East Turkestan.

China frequently says people have confessed to crimes. It was impossible to know if the woman had a lawyer to comment on her case.

China Central Television reported Thursday that the plot was a terrorist attack that had been organized and premeditated.

India pushes for worker rights in Gulf

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Oil-rich Gulf nations, already facing labor protests, are getting new pressure from India, which wants them to pay minimum wages for unskilled workers.

The move by India—which has 5 million workers in the Gulf, making it the largest source of migrants—is the strongest push yet by workers' home countries to win better conditions for their citizens. In the past, countries focused on maintaining the flow of billions of dollars workers send home every year, not their welfare.

Indian officials say they hope to sign bilateral agreements with Gulf nations setting minimum wages that would be spelled out in contracts enforced by both India and the host countries, whose economies depend on imported labor.

Gulf nations have so far resisted, fearing higher wages will accelerate already rising inflation. But officials are feeling the heat.

AP

A Tibetan Buddhist monk, center, cries while he speak to foreign journalists during their visit to the Jokhang Temple, one of Tibet's holiest shrines in Lhasa, capital of China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Thursday, March 27, 2008.

Monks disrupt China's message on Tibet

LHASA, China (AP)—The stage-managed tour of Tibet's holiest temple was going according to the government script. Suddenly, 30 young Buddhist monks pushed their way in, slammed the door, and began shouting and crying to the foreign reporters that there was no freedom in the riot-torn region.

"What the government is saying is not true," shouted one monk, first in Tibetan until the confused reporters asked them to speak in Chinese. Then a wellspring of grievances poured out before government officials abruptly ended the session and told the journalists it was "time to go."

The emotional, 15-minute outburst by the red-robed monks decrying their lack of religious freedom was the only spontaneous moment Thursday in an otherwise tightly controlled government trip to the Tibetan capital for foreign reporters following this month's deadly riots.

On the second day of the tour, officials hewed to the government line—that the most violent anti-Chinese protests in nearly two decades was plotted by the exiled Dalai Lama and his supporters. Officials escorted two dozen reporters to shops, clinics, a school and a jail to interview victims and rioters, many of them already widely interviewed by state media.

ASIAN BRIEFS

US says no meddling to save Musharraf

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP)—A senior U.S. envoy promised Thursday that Washington would not interfere in Pakistan's politics to save longtime ally President Pervez Musharraf, but he was cautious on the new government's hopes to talk peace with pro-Taliban forces. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte offered little defense for Musharraf, the former army general whose help in combatting Islamic extremists was deemed crucial by Washington after the Sept. 11 attack on the United States. Any debate "with regard to the issue of his status is something that will have to be addressed by the internal Pakistani political process," Negroponte said.

World Bank: Pakistan risks crisis

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan's new government must take urgent action to prevent the country's economy from tipping into crisis, the World Bank warned Thursday. Praful Patel, a vice president at the bank, said the South Asian country needs to make painful adjustments to higher global prices for oil, commodities and foodstuffs or risk a slowdown. "There is not yet a crisis, but the economic picture for Pakistan is not good," Patel said. "There is a good economic foundation, but the growth can only continue if Pakistan adjusts to the new global reality."

SKorea pulls its officials from NKorea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea withdrew officials from a joint economic office with North Korea at Pyongyang's request Thursday in a diplomatic spat stemming from Seoul's new tougher stance on the North's nuclear disarmament. The North made the demand Monday after South Korea's unification minister said Seoul would hold off on expanding the joint-Korean industrial zone in a North Korean border city until the dispute over Pyongyang's nuclear programs was resolved, Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon said.

World

Iraqi PM promises to fight militias in Basra

BAGHDAD (AP)—Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki pledged "no retreat" Thursday in the fight against Shiite militias in the southern city of Basra, as thousands of protesters demanded he resign over the crackdown and extremists fired rockets into the U.S.-protected Green Zone.

Shiite militia leader Muqtada al-Sadr called Thursday for a political solution to the burgeoning crisis and an end to the "shedding of Iraqi blood." But the statement, released by a close aide, stopped short of ordering his Mahdi Army militia to halt attacks on the Green Zone or stop fighting in Basra, Iraq's second-largest city.

In a sign of the deteriorating security, gunmen in Baghdad seized a high-profile government spokesman from his home in a Shiite neighborhood, killing three of his bodyguards and torching his house. In a bid to curb the violence, Iraq's military ordered vehicles and pedestrians off the streets of the capital until Sunday morning.

As Americans and Iraqis scrambled to cope with a newly violent Iraq, the State Department ordered all personnel at the U.S. Embassy not to leave reinforced structures because of continued incoming rocket or mortar fire from suspected Shiite extremists angry over the Basra crackdown.

The campaign to rid Basra of lawless gangs and Shiite militias—some believed tied to nearby Iran—is a major test for al-Maliki, a Shiite, and for the Iraqi military. The ability of Iraqi leaders and security forces to control situations like this one is key to U.S. hopes of withdrawing its forces from the country.

The prime minister put his credibility on the line by flying down to Basra and issuing a weekend deadline for the surrender of Mahdi Army militiamen loyal to al-Sadr. But the militiamen were still controlling Basra's streets Thursday, and the security operation has triggered a violent response among al-Sadr's followers in Baghdad and cities throughout the Shiite heartland of southern Iraq.

AP

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, left, and his wife Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, center, are greeted on the doorstep of 10 Downing Street by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, right, in London, Thursday, March 27, 2008.

Britain swoons for French first lady

LONDON (AP)—Nicolas Sarkozy did most of the talking, but it was his wife who made the headlines.

On his first state visit to Britain, the French president discussed matters of international importance, sealed a string of big bilateral deals and hailed a new era of Franco-British brotherhood.

So what did Britain's media focus on Thursday? Pictures of model-turned-first lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, alongside discussion of her chic Dior outfits, her effortless elegance—and her sensible low-heeled shoes.

Even Britain's notoriously Francophobe tabloid press was entranced. "Carla, first lady of chic," proclaimed The Daily Mail. "Ooh la la, Madame Sarko," said The Daily Express.

Just don't suggest to Sarkozy that his wife outshone him.

A French journalist who asked Sarkozy on Thursday if he felt upstaged was immediately rebuked. The president suggested tartly that the reporter had a "curious idea of a couple."

Bruni-Sarkozy, an Italian-born pop singer and former model who married the French president in February, caused a mighty splash in Britain, a country where politicians and their spouses are more stolid than stylish.

When the couple arrived Wednesday, many newspapers were running a photograph of a nude Bruni-Sarkozy, taken during her modeling career in 1993 and due to be sold by Christie's auction house in New York next month.

Dutch lawmaker releases anti-Quran film

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP)—A Dutch lawmaker released a film highly critical of Islam on Thursday, setting verses of the Muslim holy book against a background of violent images from terrorist attacks.

Geert Wilders posted his 15-minute film on a Web site. Shortly afterward, Dutch television channels showed segments of the film and broadcast discussions by analysts on the possible impact of its release.

The Dutch government had warned Wilders that a film offensive to Muslims could spark violent protests in Islamic countries, like those two years ago after European newspapers published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

"The film equates Islam with violence. We reject this," Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende said in a televised reaction. "We ... regret that Mr. Wilders has released this film. We believe it serves no other purpose than to cause offense."

Dutch television refused to broadcast the film, and Wilders had difficulty finding an Internet platform willing to host it.

Colombia investigates uranium find

BOGOTA (AP)—The Defense Ministry said Thursday it was investigating whether 66 pounds of uranium found buried by a roadside in southern Bogota was material being sought by leftist rebels.

Colombian authorities said earlier this month that they were worried by a document found in the laptop of a slain rebel that indicated the guerrillas were trying to obtain uranium.

It wasn't clear, Vice President Francisco Santos said at the time, whether the rebels sought to create a radioactive weapon. The document made it appear as if the insurgents were seeking to resell uranium at a profit.

The two uranium chunks found Wednesday were described by Colombia's military chief as "impoverished." Only uranium enriched through processing—something most countries, including Colombia, are not equipped to do—can be used to make nuclear weapons or power reactors, scientists say.

Two informants who had contact with a Bogota arms dealer led authorities to the uranium, said Sgt. Elizabeth Filigrana, a spokeswoman for armed forces chief Gen. Freddy Padilla. Their identities were not made public.

Saipan Tribune, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for fresh talent to join our team.

REPORTER

- At least two years' experience writing for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must know how to write hard news, features, and business stories;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, analytical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Computer literate and with driver's license.

SPORTS REPORTER

- At least two years' experience covering sports for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be willing to put in flexible work hours;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Computer literate and with driver's license;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be passionate about sports.

ART DIRECTOR

- At least five years' experience in the publishing industry or related field;
- Must have at least two years' supervisory experience in the field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have extensive knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

GRAPHIC ARTIST

- At least three years' experience in the publishing business or related field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have basic knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

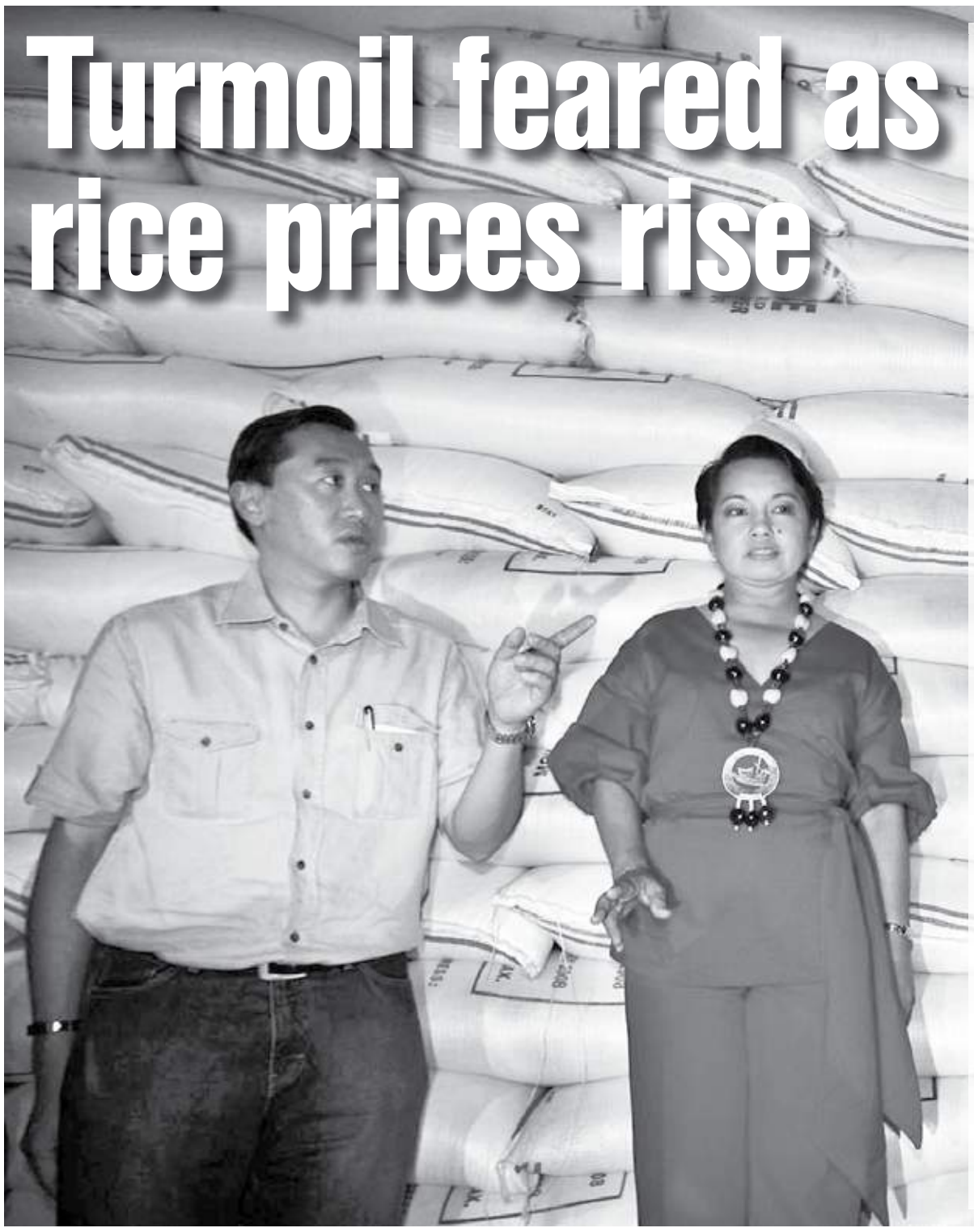
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- At least high school graduate;
- Typing speed of at least 40 words per minute
- Must have extensive experience using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Must be familiar with Mac computers (knowledge in PC is a plus);
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, and a team player.

If you think you have what it takes to be part of this dynamic team, submit your most recent résumé and portfolio to the *Saipan Tribune*, located on the second floor of the CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan. Or e-mail it to editor@saipantribune.com. On-island hires preferred.

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Maharlika – PinoyNews



Turmoil feared as rice prices rise

By PAUL ALEXANDER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine activists warn about possible riots. Aid agencies across Asia worry how they will feed the hungry. Governments dig deeper every day to fund subsidies.

A sharp rise in the price of rice is hitting consumer pocketbooks and raising fears of public turmoil in the many parts of Asia where rice is a staple.

Part of a surge in global food costs, rice prices on world markets have jumped 50 percent in the past two months and at least doubled since 2004. Experts blame rising fuel and fertilizer expenses as well as crops curtailed by disease, pests and climate change. There are concerns prices could rise a further 40 percent in coming months.

EXCHANGE RATES
DOLLAR $1.00 = PESO P41.827

The higher prices have already sparked protests in the Philippines, where a government official has asked the public to save leftover rice. In Cambodia, Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered a ban on rice exports Wednesday to curb rising prices at home. Vietnamese exporters and farmers are stockpiling rice in expectation of further price increases.

Prestoline Suyat of the May One Labor Movement, a left-wing workers group, warned that "hunger and poverty may eventually lead to riots."

The neediest are hit hardest.

Rodolfo de Lima, a 42-year-old parking lot attendant in Manila, said "my family will go hungry" if prices continue to rise.

"If your family misses a meal, you really don't know what you can do, but I won't do anything bad," said de Lima, whose right foot was amputated after he was shot during a 1985 gang war.

Others might not be so restrained, said Domingo Casarte, 41, a street vendor.

"There are people who are hotheaded," he said. "When people get trapped, I can't say what they will do."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts global rice stocks for 2007-08 at 72 million tons, the lowest since 1983-84 and about half of the peak in 2000-01.

The higher prices are stretching the budgets of aid agencies providing rice to North Korea and other countries, particularly with donations already falling.

Jack Dunford, head of a consortium in Thailand helping more than 140,000 refugees from military-ruled Myanmar, said soaring rice prices and a slumping U.S. dollar are forcing cuts in already meager food aid.

"This rice price is just killing us," he said. "This is a very vulnerable group of people under threat."

China is among several countries in the region that subsidize rice prices, an increasingly expensive proposition.

Rice prices have almost doubled in Bangladesh in just a year, sparking resentment but no unrest yet. Repeated floods and a severe cyclone last year have cut production, forcing the government to increase imports.

In Vietnam, a major rice exporter, the crop has been hit by a virus called tungro and infestations of the brown planthopper insect.

Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo right, listens as Department of Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap briefs her on the present supplies of rice during their inspection of a National Food Authority warehouse Thursday, March 27, 2008 in Butuan City in southern Philippines. AP

RP clamps down on kidney black market

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine authorities have banned kidney transplants involving foreigners, delaying some operations, until a newly approved order takes effect that is aimed at eradicating a thriving black market in organ trade, officials said Thursday.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque signed an order Monday that calls for creating a government board to oversee kidney donations and transplants, ensuring proper care of donors and making highly secretive transactions on kidney trade more transparent and ethical.

The order, which took more than two years to craft, was sought specifically because of numerous reports of patients coming here from Japan, the Middle East and Western countries in search of kidney donors. A 1991 law only regulated transplants of kidneys and other organs from brain-dead donors.

The order takes effect 15 days after it is published, possibly Friday, in a national newspaper. It prioritizes Filipino patients over foreigners in the allocation of locally available kidneys for transplants, and mandates authorities to set specific limits.

Until such limits are defined, foreigners cannot undergo kidney transplants in the country. At least six transplants involving foreigners have been postponed so far, Health Undersecretary Alexander Padilla said.

Kidney trading in the Philippines, involving dirt-poor people and prisoners who sell their organs for paltry sums to syndicates catering mostly to foreign clients, has been reported by the local media and reflects the depth of the Southeast Asian nation's poverty.

A TV report once featured a Manila slum in which dozens of men sported abdominal scars after giving up their kidneys.

About 10,000-12,500 Filipinos develop serious renal diseases each year, and about half could be saved by kidney transplants, according to the health department. Only about a tenth of those who could have transplants actually do so because kidneys are scarce and the procedures cost so much.

RP edition of Playboy out soon, sans frontal nudity

By OLIVER TEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A Philippine edition of Playboy will debut on newsstands next week, but the traditionally racy magazine will not show frontal nudity, the editor-in-chief said Thursday.

Beting Laygo Dolor said the monthly magazine—synonymous the world over with centerfolds of bare-breasted women—will feature "anything under the sun of interest to men," combining the work of investigative journalists and award-winning fiction writers.

Dolor told The Associated Press he believed the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines would be more tolerant toward Playboy than neighboring Indonesia, where the magazine was met with violent opposition from Islamic groups.

American editions of the magazine are already available in Manila and other major Philippine cities.

"I don't think the Christian community here, after seeing it, will be any angrier than (they are) say (toward) FHM or Maxim," he said, referring to two other international men's magazines that have released local editions in the Philippines.

"I think a lot of the church people, especially the more liberal ones, will appreciate what we are trying to do in terms of quality and content."

Dolor said Playboy Philippines will feature Filipino women as "playmates" in the centerfold, but won't show full frontal nudity or genitalia because that would run counter to Philippine business and cultural considerations.

"Maybe one nipple," he said.

"If you have something like full frontal nudity, the chances are you will make a lot of enemies in the church, NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), even in the government," he said. "We don't want to risk our copies being burned."

PNP academy graduates 1st identical twins

MANILA (Philippine Daily Inquirer)—The first identical twins to graduate from the Philippine National Police Academy are raring to inflict double damage on insurgents and criminals in the country.

Danilo Yema Jr. and twin brother Daniel Thursday graduated 29th and 62nd, respectively, as members of PNPA Class 2008, known as the "Oman Silang" (New Warriors).

The graduation rites for the 154 members of the class were held at PNPA headquarters at Camp Castañeda in Silang, Cavite, with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as main guest.

Now 25 years old and natives of Lipa, Batangas, Danilo Jr. is older by three minutes. Both look fit and wiry and the only way to tell them apart are the braces on Daniel's teeth.

Both have signified their intention to join the PNP's elite Special Action Force (SAF), a specialized unit trained in counter-insurgency and counterterrorism. The unit is at the forefront of the fight against communist rebels.

"The academy has prepared us to handle the job. We will give it our best and our enemies will have to watch out," Daniel told the Philippine Daily Inquirer (parent company of INQUIRER.net).

The twins' father was also a policeman and a major influence in their decision to enter the PNPA.

When asked what their ultimate goal was, Danilo said: "We want one of us to become PNP chief." Daniel nodded.

Danilo said he and his brother were proud to have survived the rigors of training at the academy.

"There is no sibling rivalry between us," Daniel said, adding with a laugh: "But sometimes, our superior officers would accuse one of us of committing infractions that the other twin had committed."

Both brothers agreed that having a twin brother at the academy served as an inspiration when the going got tough during their training.

Fil-Ams make dreams come true

By GABRIEL CARDINOZA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—Four years ago, Jie Ann Bandong had given up all hope she would ever attend college. It was a most trying time for her family.

Her father was facing a string of estafa cases at the time for his failure to pay his debts. The milkfish in the fishponds he was tending had been swept to the sea by floodwaters, and he never recovered in his business.

"I felt hopeless," said Bandong, who was graduating then as an honor student from the Pangasinan School of Arts and Trades here.

Auralyn Baliton, the second of eight siblings, was also graduating with honors from the Tayug National High School. She had accepted her fate that her schooling would stop upon her graduation.

Her father had no job and her mother's earnings as a teacher were barely enough for the basic needs of their big family.

In the same situation was Ma. Theresa Nolledo, who was also graduating as an honor student from San Quintin National High School. The salary of her father as a municipal government employee would not be enough to send her to college.

"I had accepted the fact then that I would not go to college," said Nolledo, the third child of eight.

But by a twist of fate, the three girls would end up being classmates at Pangasinan State University here when the school year opened in 2004.

Sweet victory

They were granted scholarships by the Seattle-based Washington-Pangasinan Sister State Association (WaPSSA) after a stringent screening process.

On April 4 this year, they will be graduating cum laude with Bachelor of Science degrees in Secondary Education, major in English.

To Bandong, the second eldest of six children, it was sweet victory. To Baliton and Nolledo, it was a dream come true.

For one, what they went through the past four years was as excruciating an experience as any student could imagine.

"It was a constant day-to-day struggle," Bandong said.

Although the three were WaPSSA scholars, their grant was only $400 (approximately P16,400) a year each and it was only for school-related expenses.

The money had come from WaPSSA officers and members, led by National Federation of Filipino-American Associations national president Alma Quintans-Kern.

So far, WaPSSA has sent 33 students to college and 30 of them have graduated, including 12 who are graduating next month.

Mostly noodles

The scholars came from families with no money to spare, and the grant was simply not enough. Their biggest expenses were for board and lodging, projects, uniforms and other needs.

"There were days when we did not eat and we just drank water," Baliton said.

When they did have food, it was mostly instant noodles "swimming in a lot of water so that everybody in their apartment could eat."

RAY B. ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON
Scholars graduating cum laude at Pangasinan State University are, from left, Auralyn Baliton, Ma. Theresa Nolledo, Jie Ann Bandong, Chona Nisperos.

A WaPSSA scholar studying at PSU in Bayambang was dropped from her Physical Education class because she did not have money to buy a uniform. She lost her scholarship and dropped out of college.

A troubleshooter, too

Dr. Cecilia Daranciang, a retired educator and WaPSSA member who had come home to Pangasinan to coordinate the scholarship, has committed herself to helping the scholars.

Since 2002 when the scholarship program began, Daranciang has served as the students' landlady, tutor, mother, financier, adviser and troubleshooter "just to ensure that the scholars will be studying hard to maintain their scholarships."

She houses all the scholars in an apartment just across from the PSU campus here and manages the students' day-to-day affairs. She also pays for the P15,000-a-month apartment rental and spends for the food, projects and even health needs of the scholars.

One family

"I love these kids," Daranciang said. "I'd like to see them fulfill their dreams."

But even in the seemingly ideal setting conducive to learning that Daranciang had created in the apartment, the scholars still did not have enough to meet all their needs.

Attending to the school needs of the 15 scholars living there and feeding them was a day-to-day challenge.

"We were one big family," Daranciang remarked.

She said that sometimes, she felt like giving up and returning to the United States. But she said seeing the students studying their lessons every night always made her reconsider her decision.

"My own children have been complaining that I only spend a little time with them whenever I visit them in the States because I always have to rush back to Pangasinan," she said.

Other Samaritans

Daranciang said she was grateful that a few people who were aware of the scholars' plight did not hesitate to help.

A former Sangguniang Kabataan provincial federation president, Tonette Villar-Pescador, donated a refrigerator and regularly supplies them with food.

The president of the Pangasinan-Washington Sister State Association (Pawassa), Celia Lambino, was also a frequent supplier of food and grocery items. Pawassa, WaPSSA's local counterpart, administered the scholarship program.

Clouds linger

Despite the support and Daranciang's help, the hardships of their families back home haunted the scholars.

In her second year, Bandong decided to quit schooling and took a bus to Laguna, where she worked in a factory.

"It was so hard for our family and I had to help," Bandong said.

But before Bandong could miss the school year, Daranciang followed her to Laguna and prevailed upon her to return and resume her studies.

Another scholar, Jerome Patungan, who will graduate from PSU magna cum laude in BSE Social Studies, almost fell into a depression just thinking about where to get money.

Close to the edge

Patungan had been penniless for days and there was nothing that his poor family could give him at the time. He was not present during the interview in Lingayen because he did not have money to pay for his fare from his hometown, Malasiqui.

A Pawassa official said one student was so troubled he was on the verge of suicide but his co-boarders were able to console him.

Baliton said not being able to see their parents was also very difficult for the scholars. For instance, she said, she could only go home to Tayug every two months to visit her family because the fare was P200.

What pushed the scholars to finish their studies even in the direst of circumstances was their determination to lift their families out of poverty, Daranciang said.

Sense of fulfillment

Nolledo said she would be able to help her family soon. Bandong, for her part, plans to send her younger siblings to college when she finds a job.

"There's a sense of fulfillment every time we see our scholars graduate," said Armi Bangsal-Lorica, Pawassa treasurer.

"They had nothing and yet they gave the best of themselves. I cry whenever I think of them," she said.

Lorica said she hoped WaPSSA would find more sponsors and send more poor but deserving students to college. She said for the next school year, Kern had committed, so far, to sponsor two students.

A job soon

This year, Kern sponsored three scholars, WaPSSA sponsored two, and couples and individuals like Frank and Virgie Palisoc, Bert and Ciony Caoile, Alfonso Quintans and Norielyn de Guzman-Catabay—who are all US-based—sponsored one each.

Socialite Rose Marie "Baby" Arenas donated P100,000 in 2006 while Pangasinan Board Member Danilo Uy sponsored one scholar.

"We are very happy that at last we have graduated. I just hope I'll get a job soon," Bandong said.

"In behalf of all the scholars, I would like to thank all the sponsors for their generosity, especially Mr. and Mrs. Frank Palisoc, who sponsored me," she said.

Goal of balancing budget this year at risk from rising prices

CLARK, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines may not be able to balance its budget this year because the government needs to spend more to ensure strong economic growth and avert a potential food crisis, the top budget official said Wednesday.

"The need for accelerated spending will put more pressure on revenue and threaten the target (of a balanced budget)," Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya told reporters.

Officials said earlier the government plans to push forward spending on infrastructure this year to help the economy cope with an expected slowdown in the U.S., the country's main trading partner and a major source of investments.

Andaya did not elaborate, but he cited efforts to avoid a potential crisis arising from soaring food prices, particularly rice, the staple grain.

The Philippines posted a budget deficit of 13.9 billion pesos (US$339 million) in January, less than half from a year ago.

The 2007 deficit has been revised upward to 12.4 billion pesos (US$302 million) from the initial 9.4 billion pesos (US$229 million)—but still only about a fifth of the projected ceiling of 63 billion pesos (US$1.5 billion).

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, addressing donor countries and multilateral institutions at the former U.S. Air Base at Clark, northwest of Manila, struck a positive note, saying she expected the budget to be balanced "way ahead of the medium-term plan schedule of 2010."

Arroyo and other officials had earlier said a balanced budget would be achieved this year.

"We are at a tipping point. I'm confident that the Philippines will tip forward in pursuit of reaching the status of first-world within a generation," Arroyo said, citing last year's 7.3 percent GDP growth.

Rights group urges UN to take RP to task

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A human rights group urged the United Nations on Thursday to take the Philippines to task for failing to prosecute soldiers suspected of involvement in a string of extrajudicial killings.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said the Philippines has done little to implement recommendations made last year by Philip Alston, the U.N. special envoy on extrajudicial killings, as well as the government's own fact-finding commission.

Both have linked soldiers to hundreds of deaths and disappearances of mostly left-wing activists belonging to political organizations that the military brands as fronts for communist rebels.

"The list of actions touted by the Philippine government as progress unfortunately seems little more than 'window-dressing,'" said Elaine Pearson, Human Rights Watch's deputy director for Asia. She told reporters that the actions seemed "designed to merely deflect ... criticism."

The Geneva-based U.N. Human Rights Council will hold its first Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines' human rights record April 11, during which council members can question government representatives in a public session.

All governments are subjects to the review.

"This is something we take seriously," Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye told reporters. "I am sure the government will make the appropriate explanation to the international community."

He said the Presidential Human Rights Commission was prepared to meet with the U.N. council to address the issue.

Pearson said the Philippines has reported to the council that the number of killings dropped significantly in 2007.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo told foreign diplomats in January that seven activists and journalists were killed last year, compared to 41 in 2006.

The left-wing human rights group Karapatan also reported considerably fewer activists were killed or abducted last year, but gave higher figures of 68 activists slain and 26 missing, down from 185 dead and 93 missing in 2006.

Karapatan head Marie Hilao Enriquez said in a December report that the drop can be attributed to pressure from the diplomatic community and human rights groups.

The report said 887 left-wing activists and their supporters have been killed and another 185 have disappeared since Arroyo took office in 2001.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

And the Dollywood Award goes to...

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Since it's graduation time, here's Dollywood's show biz honor roll:

Most Honest: "Di ako pwedeng mag feeling close kay Marian kasi di talaga kami friends. Magkatrabaho lang kami."—Katrina Halili

Most Funny: "Kung ibang stars deny nang deny, ako naman bago pa ako tanungin umaamin na ako para di na humaba ang isyu."—Joey Marquez

Most Sensible: "I feel violated when some celebs share more than they should. It's one thing to be found out and quite another to volunteer too much information about yourself."—Lea Salonga

Most Touching: "When my mom died, tumigil ang mundo ko."—Aga Muhlach

Most Intriguing: "LJ Reyes and I had what I would call a perfect breakup."—Alfred Vargas

Most Empowering: "There's life after marriage."—Amalia Fuentes

Most Thought-Provoking: "I don't see the need for me and my BF Mike to get married or live together. Why fix something that ain't broken?"—Gloria Diaz

Most Inspiring: "We should not let the system box us in. A true artist can never work in a box."—Cesar Montano

Katrina Halili

Most Candid: "Karamihan sa mga lalaki hindi ka nga papalitan bilang GF, magdadagdag lang sila."—Sunshine Cruz

Most Frank: "If a guy wants to date me exclusively, he has to be exclusively mine, too."—Miriam Quiambao

Most 'Kilig': "I have come this far because Karylle was behind me all the way so why would I let intrigues come between us now? We are together on this journey."—Dingdong Dantes

Most Dramatic: "Tirahin na nila ko nang tirahin. Wag lang pamilya ko."—Rufa Mae Quinto

Most Original: "I'd rather not be labeled as Kapamilya or Kapuso. I would prefer to be called Katrabaho."—Direk Joey Reyes

Most Sincere: "I've stopped dwelling on competition. I just focus on doing what I have to do in the best way I can."—Angel Locsin

Most Heartwarming: "I am a citizen of the world, having been raised in various places, but I'm a Pinoy at heart."—Marc Nelson

Unresolved matters

Some quarters are harping on why Ogie Alcasid hasn't formally proposed marriage to Regine Velasquez yet. Taking the plunge seems to be the next logical step after Ogie's admission of their long-standing romance.

As much as Ogie and Regine want to tie the knot, they still cannot. There are still some unresolved matters in Ogie's previous marriage to Michelle Van Eimeren.

But in all the ways that matter, Ogie and Regine feel married already while Michelle cheers them on. That's what I call "Love in the Time of Trios."

Bio pic?

Since Gabby Concepcion unceremoniously bolted from his movie with Jolina Magdangal, GMA Films will just give him another project so they can both fulfill their contractual obligations. Since Gabo wants the story to revolve around him, maybe it should be a movie about his checkered past. Wonder if all the women he got involved with would be willing to be part of the film. And if ever, will their billing be in alphabetical or chronological order?

Witting 'ninong'

I cornered Mark Herras about his ex Jennylyn Mercado. She's heavy with Patrick Garcia's baby and her heart is even heavier with all the trials her unexpected pregnancy has brought about.

"Girl ang magiging anak ni Jen, " Mark said. "Nag-volunteer na ko maging ninong. Bahala na kung lagyan ng kulay, tulad nung nagmagandang loob ako magbigay ng milk kay Jen at ako pa ang pinalabas na kontrabida." Has he seen Patrick after the intrigues broke out? "Di pa. Sana di kami magkasalubong," he said. (I've volunteered to be a godfather, I don't care what other's would say. I have not seen Patrick since the intrigues broke out, and I hope we won't stumble into each other.)

After Jen and Pat had a falling out, Mark has been pinpointed by malicious minds as the alleged father of Jen's unborn child. "Kawawa naman si Jen. Let's give her the respect she deserves," Mark pleaded.

If he and Jen remain single in the distant future, Mark said he's open to the possibility of a reconciliation.

To lighten the mood, I teased him, "What if the rumor will prompt other girls to claim that you're the dad of their babies?" He replied, giggling, "They should have a claim stub." I shot back in jest, "Plus a proof of purchase!"

Dyesebel's Mer-man

All the fame hasn't changed Alfred Vargas, whom I've known since his Ateneo days. He's looking forward to his role in Dyesebel. "I'll be a Mer-man. I have to take extensive diving lessons for my role. I'm the third wheel in Marian and Dingdong's romance in the show. But di ako 'yung tipong bad guy." Is he ready to bare more than he should when he wears nothing but fins in the coming telefantasya? "I tried on my costume already and it's unavoidable that some parts of me might get exposed accidentally when I move. That should make it more exciting to watch," he said with a naughty grin. If you have it, float, er, flaunt it!

PERSONAL FINANCE

From employee to entrepreneur

INQUIRER.net

Question: My close friends and I have been working for the past 10 years. But we're now thinking of letting go of our jobs and starting our own business. Besides, we've heard from a lot of entrepreneurs that the employed won't get any rich unless they start their own business.

We've already finalized our business plan and are set to start our food cart business in the summer. Do you think it's wise to let go of our jobs now so we can focus on our business? What can we do to ensure that we'll have enough cash flow while the business is still in its startup stage?—Marcia I.

Answer: We commend you, Marcia, for taking steps to secure your future by venturing into business. A business is a form of investment. One goes into it with the hope of earning profits while satisfying the needs of the market.

Many business moguls have pointed out time and again that having a business is the key to getting rich. That may be true for some, but not for all.

That's because like any other medium- or high-risk investment, a business may or may not generate profits. It depends on how hard you work, how the market responds, and how good you are at meeting the market's needs and demands.

Given that you already made a business plan, we assume that you have studied all aspects of your intended food cart business. You would have already projected how many units to sell each day to break even or cover your costs. You would also have an idea as to how long it will take for your business to recover your investment (what is known as the return on investment or ROI).

But these are mere projections. Many businesses look good on paper but when business owners start operations, they find out that the market does not respond the way they have projected. Cash sales are not enough to cover all startup and operating costs. Losses thus happen, and worse, businesses fail. Or, the projected ROI in two years takes five years or more.

We know you don't want that to happen, and neither do we want that to happen. Heed the following tips then, before plunging full-time into your business:

1. Assess how much savings you have.

Since most business owners source most of their capital from their personal savings, we assume that you will do the same.

Sit down and write how much savings you have. Look not just at your bank accounts, but holdings in mutual funds or unit investment trust funds, or even equities. Are these enough for your share in the starting capital of your business?

If not, then you may be thinking that you will earn through the business anyway and will be able to put in additional capital. We caution you against this thinking, as the business may or may not grow as expected in the timeline projected. It would be better to ensure that you personally have enough in your savings to meet capital needs even before you start your business operations.

2. Keep your day jobs—for now.

Don't expect to earn salary from your business from day one. It may take time for the business to prosper, and until then, you'll have to make sure that you will have earnings to meet your living expenses. Otherwise, you'll have to dip into your savings.

Since you're going into the business with partners, discuss who among you can take an active role in the day-to-day operations. That person may go into the business full-time now for a start-up salary (as long as she has back-up savings to meet her living expenses). Then as the business grows and expands, you may all see the need to focus on the business—that's the time to let go of your day jobs.

3. Start small.

While the business is still in the startup stage, keep your costs small. Consider having the office in a home to save on office rent. Hire only enough people you need. Instead of buying a new delivery or utility van, buy a good secondhand one, or use your personal vehicle. Outsource some jobs such as accounting to keep overhead costs low.

4. Do everything right from the start.

Keep personal and business funds separate. Make sure you have all the required permits and paperwork before starting your business. Pay business licenses and taxes correctly and on time so as not to incur penalty. Otherwise, penalties and surcharges will eat into your business coffers.

5. Don't neglect keeping your personal finances healthy.

Continue saving from your salary. At least 10 percent of your gross pay is a good start-up point but higher is better. Aim to have an emergency fund covering at least six months' worth of personal expenses. Should your business fail, then you have a fund to dip into until you are ready for your next move.

6. Expand only after much thought.

It's tempting to open another branch right away if the first one picks up well. Some also buy new equipment and other fixed assets during the first year even when the business cannot support such purchases yet.

Before going into any expansion for the business, study your cash flow and the costs to be involved. Make an intelligent decision based on your financials.

7. Seek a mentor.

It's good to ask someone for business advice, preferably a successful entrepreneur, so you won't make costly mistakes. Find a mentor you can trust and meet that person regularly.

Joining business organizations will also be helpful to you in terms of learning from others and expanding your network.

We wish you well in your food cart business.

INQUIRER.net and Citibank invite readers to ask questions regarding financial matters. Send your questions to personal_finance@inquirer.net. Readers are solely responsible for their own investment decisions and should thus conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional advice. INQUIRER.net will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from our web site.

Maharlika – Opinyon

Letter to the Editor

Bishops' apologia for Arroyo

Editor's Note: *This letter was initially published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on March 28, 2008*

It's good of the bishops of the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Province of Manila to suggest that corruption is a sickness that afflict most—if not all—Filipinos. But how dare they suggest that at the heart of the Filipino is a thief, and a murderer. "Our people are known to be God-fearing and God-loving; sadly, they fight, deceive and kill for money."

As a fellow Catholic and as their inferior in the Church, let me tell the cardinal and all the signatories to the March 16 pastoral letter of the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Province of Manila: Filipinos are God-fearing but they are not—repeat, "not"—murderers. And because they are not, generations upon generations of corrupt oligarchs and politicians have enjoyed, with impunity, a life of crimes against the Filipino people.

This is what is wrong with our nation: we have leaders who have been given the ear and faith of the public but who continuously disappoint their constituents; leaders who only think of themselves and whose point of view does not go beyond their small circles of friends and acquaintances and limited interests. How dare these prelates suggest that we are all greedy murderers.

The pastoral letter is unconscionable. It is both an indictment of the Filipino and an apology for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her cronies. Jesus Christ! If these bishops really think this way, then I have no choice but to complain to the Vatican.

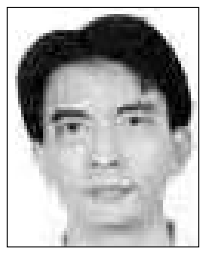
Let me tell the cardinal and bishops this: Millions of Filipinos go hungry without ever contemplating of committing a crime. Millions of parents, sons and daughters brave lonely lives in strange cultures to provide their families a decent existence, without a thought of their own happiness.

Your patronizing tone in your pastoral letter and your broad condemnation of the Filipino people are tantamount to spitting on their and other honest Filipinos' faces.

Brian Brotarlo
via e-mail

1902

PINOY KASI
By MICHAEL TAN
Philippine Daily Inquirer



In the year 1902, the Philippines was very much in the Americans' public consciousness, much like Iraq is today. America's adventure in the Philippines began in 1898, when it went to war against Spain. Commodore George Dewey sailed into the Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, and quickly defeated the already demoralized Spanish forces. Spain had its hands full in the islands, with Filipino revolutionaries fighting for independence and was probably only too happy to unload the Philippines, together with Guam and Costa Rica, to the Americans through the Treaty of Paris.

But trouble was already brewing when the Treaty of Paris was ratified by the US Senate in February 1899. Only two days before the ratification, hostilities had broken out in Manila when an American patrol was supposedly attacked by a band of Filipino insurgents. The Philippine-American War erupted and more American soldiers had to be sent to the islands.

Within a few weeks after the Philippine-American War broke out, allegations of US military atrocities began to appear in the United States. In April 1899, a New York newspaper, the Evening Post, carried reports of a massacre of Filipino prisoners in Caloocan. Then, as today in Iraq, such reports often came from conscience-stricken American soldiers, who would request anonymity. The Evening Post ran into trouble because they could not bring out the soldiers and eventually had to retract.

But the letters continued and more American newspapers picked up on these reports. Most disturbing were reports of the use of the "water cure," large amounts of water forced into prisoners to extract confessions. There were so many reports of this torture that eventually, the US Senate had to launch an inquiry into the behavior of American soldiers in the Philippines. The hearings began on Jan. 31, 1902, and were conducted by the Senate's Committee on the Philippines, headed by Henry Cabot Lodge.

The Committee's members were largely biased in favor of the American occupation of the Philippines but enough evidence was presented in the hearings, about the water cure, "reconcentration" camps and outright massacres, to bring out public condemnation of the war.

The hearings put the American military on the defensive. It supplied witnesses who claimed that the instances of military misconduct were isolated. William Howard Taft, who had been assigned to the Philippines, even argued that the Filipinos themselves sometimes asked to be tortured, so that if they gave away information about their comrades, they could claim this was forced out of them.

Other American soldiers testified that the Filipino insurgents also had their share of atrocities. Former Sgt. L. E. Hallock said they had used the water cure after one of their men had been captured and then tortured to death by roasting. Other American soldiers testified that the water cure was inflicted mainly by Macabebes, Filipinos recruited from Pampanga, to serve as interpreters and scouts for the Americans.

Again, as with Iraq, war was cruel for both sides, and one can imagine how difficult it was for American soldiers to understand the Philippines and Filipinos. What was clear though was that many of the Americans were goaded on by racism. A Gen. Robert Hughes, asked if the military's behavior in the Philippines came under the "limits of civilized warfare," replied: "These people are not civilized."

Senator Lodge himself proposed that the misconduct had "grown out of the conditions of warfare, of the war that was waged by the Filipinos themselves, a semi-civilized people, with all the tendencies and characteristics of Asiatics, with the Asiatic indifference to life, with the Asiatic treachery and the Asiatic cruelty, all tinctured and increased by 300 years of subjection to Spain."

The hearings did result in some action. Capt. Edwin Glenn, accused of ordering the use of the water cure and the burning of Igbaras, Iloilo, was court-martialed. He asked that the hearings be conducted in Catbalogan, Samar, away from the "high state of excitement in the United States." Glenn was found guilty of "conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline," suspended for one month and ordered to pay a $50 fine. In 1919, he retired as brigadier general. Ealdama went back to prison, where he was serving a 10-year sentence of hard labor for his participation in the insurgency.

Another court martial was ordered for Gen. Jacob Smith, this one held in Manila. One of his officers had testified that "Hell-roaring Jake" had ordered troops to retaliate against the town of Balanginga in Samar for an ambush that resulted in the death of 48 US Army soldiers. Smith allegedly ordered: "the more you kill and burn, the better it will please me." Asked who they could spare, Smith was said to have commented that even a child of 10 could bear arms. Reports on the number of Balanginga's death toll vary, going up as high as 5,000.

Smith was found guilty, and his punishment consisted of a slight reprimand and early retirement.

The Lodge Committee hearings, and these court martials, may have served to defuse public anxieties, and eventually, the Americans grew tired of the news about the Philippines. As early as April 1902, one New York newspaper complained that readers were being served too much of "Philippine atrocities" for breakfast.

On July 4, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt declared a victorious end to the Philippine Insurrection. Officially, there were no more insurgents, only "brigands" (bandits). The Lodge Committee officially declared an end to its inquiry on February 1903.

'Waterboarding'It was not, however, the last we were to hear of the American military and the water cure. More than a century later, in fact just last month, an investigation into "waterboarding" began in the US Congress. The US Central Intelligence Agency's Michael Hayden argued that "Strapping a person to a surface, covering their face with cloth and pouring water on their face to imitate the sensation of drowning" could be used if "an unlawful combatant is possessing information that would help us prevent catastrophic loss of life of Americans or their allies." Hayden said they had used the method in 2002 and 2003 but only on three top al-Qaida suspects. The US attorney general, Michael Mukasey, said he would not open a criminal investigation into the CIA's use of waterboarding.

Diaspora to enrich Filipino history

LOOKING BACK
By AMBETH OCAMPO
Philippine Daily Inquirer

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

People have always wondered how I would fare in a TV game show. Most presume I'd win because they think I'm a fountain of useless historical information. My sisters wish me well but they know I will be eliminated quickly because I may know something about the 16th-century Philippines but remain clueless regarding current show-biz gossip and sports. What, for example, is the Hanapepe Massacre? Faced with this million-peso question on the Pinoy version of the US game show (Are you smarter than a 5-year-old?), anyone will break into a cold sweat unless he/she is indeed a 5-year-old Filipino-American from Hawaii or Dr. Belinda Aquino, director of the Philippine Studies Program in the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

One of the most violent labor strikes in the Hawaii plantations happened in the island of Kauai in 1924. It resulted in the deaths of 16 Filipinos and four policemen. This has gone down in Filipino-Hawaiian history as the Hanapepe Massacre.

While being given a tour around Honolulu recently, someone made a quip about the rude words connected with the famous downtown beach Waikiki and the upscale enclave, called Makiki Heights, where former President Ferdinand Marcos and his family lived in exile after Edsa I. If textbook history in the Philippines has yet to integrate local or regional histories into a larger national narrative, it will have to take various strands of history that have been made by Filipinos overseas.

Professor Aquino, who writes occasionally for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, has drawn up the beginnings of the history of the Filipinos in Hawaii. This history stretches back a century, to the first 15 sakadas who arrived in Honolulu aboard the S.S. Doric on Dec. 20, 1906.

Fifteen men were first recruited from the Ilocos; they were contracted by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association and sent to Olaa to work. Their names and ages upon arrival in Honolulu were recorded as follows: Martin de Jesus, 22; Mauricio Cortes, 21; Celestino Cortez, 19; Cecilio Sagun, 27; Prudencio Sagun 28; Marciano Bello, 28; Filomeno Rebollido, 30; Apolonio Ramos, 26; Emiliano Dasula, 26; Julian Galmen, 20; Simplicio Gironella, 56; Vicente Gironella, 19; Mariano Gironella, 23; Francisco Gironella, 18; and Antonio Gironella, 14. From the list alone, one can see that people of the same family took the same risk. Francisco Gironella was said to have been the most articulate in English and thus acted as the interpreter of the group. His father and brother were to return to the Philippines to help recruit more workers for the Hawaii plantations until they were joined by hundreds more over time. Thus began the Filipino community in Hawaii. Most of the sakadas were illiterate because the recruiters were wary of intelligent ones who were potential "troublemakers." Uprooted from their land and loved ones, they suffered hardships on the plantations for a dollar a day, and yet were able to send some savings home and enticed others to follow them to the land of milk and honey. Men, women and children from the Philippines arrived yearly till there were over 12,000 in the lists by 1946. The Filipinos constituted the majority, followed by the Japanese.

In time the Filipinos would get involved in labor unrest. In 1919, led by Pablo Manlapit, they formed the Filipino Labor Federation. Then, as now, Filipinos were like amoebas that would rather divide and multiply than unite. So another labor group was organized whose name gave away their main aim. This was the Higher Wages Movement. Thus organized the Filipinos joined the Japanese workers in a strike in 1920, prompting the Philippine Government to send a certain Cayetano Ligot to look into their grievances and living conditions.

Unfortunately, Ligot sided with the management and Pablo Manlapit was arrested for his pro-labor activities. After the Hanapepe Massacre in 1924, there was the 1937 strike by thousands of Filipino workers that won them major benefits and led to the arrest and deportation of Manlapit. Then there was the 1947 pineapple shutdown, the 1949 longshore strike and the 1958 sugar strike. The last 6,000 sakadas arrived in Hawaii in 1946.

Today the Filipino community is a sizable but quiet presence in the islands. They have much to be proud of and have a long list of firsts, among them: the first US governor of Filipino ancestry--Benjamin Cayetano of Hawaii; the first Filipino-American justice of a state supreme court--Benjamin Menor; the first Filipino-American mayor of a US county--Eduardo Malapit of Kauai; the first Filipino-American woman mayor--Lorraine Rodero-Inouye of the Big Island, who is now a Hawaii state senator. The list of firsts for Filipinos and Fil-ams in Hawaii is quite long, the most significant being the first lawsuit brought on Honolulu by Manuel Fragante who topped a written exam but was denied employment because of his "heavy Filipino accent." Thus, his suit has been entered in the books as a case of "accent discrimination."

Surely there are similar histories being compiled and written in other places in the United States where there are many Filipinos and Filipino-Americans. The same will also be true in other places in the world where Filipinos have chosen to live and work, and to raise children. Our history, now already complicated by being an archipelagic country with 7,000 islands and different ethno-linguistic groups, will be enriched by the history of the Filipino diaspora.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

EASTER HAPPENINGS

Erica Faye Tubera and Alyssa Benavente pose with their proud parents and Shandel Cayabyab's parents during Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan's "Biggest Egg Hunt Party and Easter Brunch" on Sunday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Prince the magician entertains the children during the Magic Show at the Azucena Room of Fiesta Resort and Spa on Easter Sunday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Shandel Cayabyab entertains the crowd with song presentations on Easter Sunday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Saipan Singing Superstar seven-year-old Erika Tubera hit the high notes as she performs a song number at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Sunday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Best Easter Egg Hunter Cathryn Javier 9, counts her collected eggs after the Easter egg hunt activity Sunday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Alexis Adelantar shows her lucky Golden Egg during the festive event.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Members of the Zynergy Band entertain the crowd during the Easter Sunday party at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

ENVIRONMENT ADVOCATES

Beautify CNMI!'s Angelo Villagomez join Friends of the Mariana Islands president Marites Castillo and members Isabel Amarille, Roger Castillo and Precy as they hold their trophies for Steward award and Champion award after the Jake Shimabukuro's concert at the Saipan World Resort Thursday night.

MARK RABAGO

EASTER EGG HUNT

Grace Christian Assembly held an Easter Egg Hunt for its Sunday school kids last Resurrection Sunday at the GCA grounds on Navy Hill. Photo above shows 4-5 year old kids posing for the camera after their egg hunt.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

SHIRLEY'S CLEANUP

Volunteers from Shirley's Coffee Shop gather for a photo during the cleanup along Quartermaster on Beach Road Monday afternoon.

FIRST BIRTHDAY

Happy birthday greetings go out to Avril Lazar, who is celebrating her first birthday today, March 29, 2008. Greetings from Royce, Rane and Roxanne family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youngstyle

Gamers, Guinness has a record book just for you

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

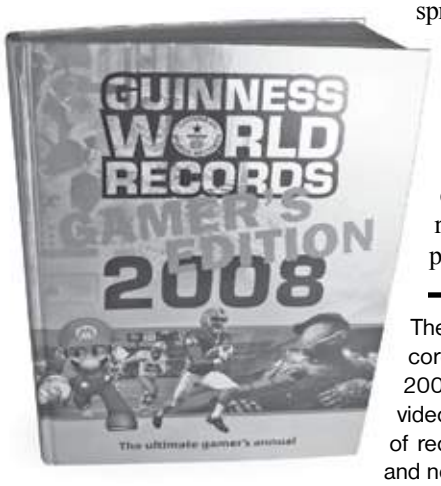
If you own one of the 155 million Pokemon video games ever sold or if you love to burn off calories playing Dance Dance Revolution, Guinness World Records wants to add this new book to your at-home library.

"Gamer's Edition 2008" traces the history of video games, with bazillions of records set between 1972 and now.

But you don't have to be a passive observer of what other players have accomplished. Apply for your own record: One of the first things you'll find in the book is information on how to get yourself included in the 2009 edition.

What's to like: As with all Guinness lists, this book is a series of "ests": the biggest, fastest, youngest, oldest, smallest, largest. Anything that CAN be listed IS listed: the top 100 games, the highest scores, the best sellers—you name it, spread over 256 boldly illustrated pages.

There's a thorough recapping of the early days (ask Grandpa about "Pong"), which could be an excellent resource for a class report on video games.



The Guinness World Records' "Gamer's Edition 2008" traces the history of video games, with bazillions of records set between 1972 and now. THE WASHINGTON POST

Check out the history of game hardware and the two-page reviews of dozens of classics such as Super Mario, Donkey Kong, Madden NFL and Guitar Hero. You'll also learn about games that were big hits in Japan but never caught on elsewhere.

Meet composer Tommy Tallarico, who has worked on the soundtracks of more than 275 games, and get tips from Victor De Leon III, the world's youngest professional game player (he will turn 10 in May).

What's not to like: For one thing, there is so much information you can't possibly take it all in, even in several sittings. Unless you are a total gamer, your brain might begin to frazzle after 10 minutes. Also, parents with younger children might not approve of the space (and artwork) given to games for teens and adults, some of which have violent themes.

Try your hand at this game

Match the numbered game with the letters at right:

1. Pro tennis players represented in Virtua Tennis 3
2. Playable characters in Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga
3. Notes in the hardest song in Guitar Hero III
4. Different platforms for Tetris
5. Perfect score in Pac-Man
6. Most points scored in arcade Donkey Kong

A. 19
B. 55
C. 120
D. 3,722
E. 1,050,200
F. 3,333,360

Answers: 1-A, 2-C, 3-D, 4-B, 5-F, 6-E

© 2008, The Washington Post

Your time to rhyme

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Generations of readers have puzzled over the meaning of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky," considered by many to be the greatest nonsense poem in the English language. Now comes author-illustrator Christopher Myers with his own interpretation.

Carroll's words are as mystifying as ever — "the vorpal blade went snicker-snack," to give one example — but Myers' drawings are vividly clear.

Myers re-imagines the 1871 poem in today terms: The larger-than-life Jabberwock is the menacing king of a city basketball court. No one dares take him on until ... well, you'll have to get a copy of the book to find out.

Reading "Jabberwocky" is just one way to enjoy National Poetry Month in April. Some other good poetry books, with selected lines, are shown here, too.

Note: Not all poems have repeating sounds at the end of the lines. And some do not have regular meter or form. You can just express yourself in a creative way.

POETRY EXCERPTS

"Keeping the Night Watch," by Hope Anita Smith; E.B. Lewis, illustrator; ages 9 and older. In this sequel to "The Way a Door Closes," a teen-ager feels anger and confusion when his father returns to the family he abandoned.

When the quake hit,
it hit hard,
shook us to our core.
Our fine bone-china security
fell to the floor and shattered.

■ ■ ■

"The Brothers' War: Civil War Voices in Verse," by J. Patrick Lewis; ages 9 and older. Haunting historic photos are paired with stirring words inspired by the people—North and South, slave and free—of a nation at war with itself.

In the bloody Battle of Seven Pines,
a young soldier, Absalom Flowers,
whose mother baked the most delicious cobbler
in Roanoke, whose father was nothing really,
stopped a Union bullet with his face. ...

■ ■ ■

"Don't Bump the Glump! And Other Fantasies," by Shel Silverstein; ages 8-12. This collection of crazy creatures, the author's first book of poetry, had been out of print for three decades. Happily, it's back.

I fear the wrath
Of the Underslung Zath.
Will someone else tell him
It's time for his bath?

■ ■ ■

"Honeybee," by Naomi Shihab Nye; ages 12 and older. The author shares her thoughts about birth, death and what happens in between.

Bees drink from thousands of flowers,
spitting up nectar
so you may have honey
in your tea.

■ ■ ■

"The Blood-Hungry Spleen and Other Poems About Our Parts," by Allan Wolf; Greg Clarke, illustrator; ages 10-12. A head-to-toe examination of the human body, inside and out.

A boneless boy would be a bore,
his body in a muddle.
He'd lie in silence on the floor.
He'd be a human puddle.

■ ■ ■

"My Dog May Be a Genius," by Jack Prelutsky; James Stevenson, illustrator; ages 6-10.

Readers will be amused by these tales of underwater musicians, forgetful elephants, a boy who loves homework (!) and summer campers.

My counselor says I have to write _
I threw up on my sweater.
I had the runs again last night,
my rash is getting better.

© 2008, The Washington Post

Sources of inspiration include, from left, "Keeping the Night Watch" by Hope Anita Smith, "Honeybee," by Naomi Shihab Nye and "The Brothers' War: Civil War Voices in Verse" by J. Patrick Lewis.
THE WASHINGTON POST

April is National Poetry Month. Good poetry books include, from left, author-illustrator Christopher Myers' updated interpretation of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky," "The Blood-Hungry Spleen and Other Poems About Our Parts" by Allan Wolf and "My Dog May Be a Genius," by children's poet laureate Jack Prelutsky.
THE WASHINGTON POST

Kids talk with actress Allie DiMeco

By SIOBHAN BECKER and DANIELLE OWEN
© 2008, NEWSDAY

We spoke with actress Allie DiMeco, who plays Rosalina on Nickelodeon's "The Naked Brothers Band," recently in Manhattan.

Question: What do you like best and least about your character?

Answer: I love that Rosalina is so trustworthy, and she's a good friend. I don't like, however, that she does kind of keep Nat (Wolff)on his toes and never really lets him know how she feels, so, therefore, he's always nervous around her. And she's jealous.

Allie DiMeco

Q: Do you like being the only girl in the band?

A: I actually love being the only girl in the band. It's so cool. I get to bond with the boys, and . . . it brings out the guy in me. And the boys come to me for a girl's advice.

Q: Do you play more than one musical instrument?

A: I only play the bass right now, although Alex (Wolff) is teaching me how to play the drums. I think it's cool for a girl to play the bass. You don't see that a lot, a kind of rocker chick.

Q: If you could choose only one to do—acting on a TV show or performing in a band—which would it be?

A: Ouch! I don't know. I love both of them. Maybe acting on a show because I can always act that I'm in a band.

Q: How do you and the cast members pass time when not filming on the set?

A: We play video games, 24/7. I fight them for that controller. We also play ping-pong. They always shoot the ball at me, and when it hits me, it hurts!

Q: If you could have anyone guest star on the show, who would you choose?

A: (Skateboarder) Ryan Sheckler—hands down! He's so cute! And Cody Linley (Jake on "Hannah Montana"); he's adorable.

Q: We read that you're also a gymnast. What's your favorite routine, and do you have a gymnast who is your idol?

A: I'm not really familiar with a lot of the gymnasts. I love doing the floor routine, because I also do cheerleading. The beam just scares me.

I don't really like running at stationary objects such as the vault, that scares me, too. I do like the parallel bars, although it roughs up your skin.

Q: We read that you'd like to become a journalist like Barbara Walters. What interests you about a career in journalism?

A: I love writing. It's a great way to express yourself. I think Barbara Walters is an amazing journalist, and she has a TV talk show ("The View").

Q: Where do you see yourself, 10 and 20 years from now?

A: I definitely see myself going to college and graduating college, still pursuing acting—who knows where this will take me. I love kids, but when I'm older, I'll try to start a family. Hopefully, teaching . . . acting and writing.

Keep It original

While you can be inspired by something you read somewhere or heard someone say, an original poem must come from inside your head. If you need some poem-writing tips, check out "Pizza, Pigs, and Poetry," by Jack Prelutsky. He has been writing poetry for more than 40 years and is the nation's first Children's Poet Laureate (LORE-ee-it), a title that says he's really good at it. ***(© 2008, The Washington Post)***

Rabbit and hare: Two of a kind

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

An occasional series of articles about the differences between similar animals.

What's your guess: Is Bugs Bunny a wascally wabbit or a harebrained hare?

Answer: He's probably a jackrabbit, which means he's no rabbit at all. A jackrabbit is actually a hare.

Say what?

Rabbits and hares both are small mammals with long front teeth, fluffy short tails, long ears and long back legs for running and jumping. They look similar and are often mistaken for one another; some, like the jackrabbit, are even misnamed.

Telling the difference between hares and rabbits can be difficult. So we went to an expert. Bob King, curator of the Small Mammal House and the Kids' Farm at the National Zoo, sets the record straight for KidsPost's Brenna Maloney.

Offspring

The easiest way to tell a rabbit from a hare is to see its babies. "Hares are born ready to go," King says, while newborn rabbits "are basically helpless." They lack fur and are blind, so they need a lot of help from their mothers. Newborn hares have fur and can see. They hop around soon after birth. Also, mother rabbits shelter their young in a soft, fur-lined nest. Mother hares do not make nests for their young.

Home Life

Once the animal is grown, there's no way to tell what it was like when it was born. So you might need to follow it to see where it lives. All rabbits except cottontails dig holes and live underground in burrows. Hares prefer simple above-ground nests. Here's another difference: Rabbits are social animals and like living in large groups; hares tend to be loners, living alone or in pairs.

Physique

Hares usually are larger, lankier and faster than rabbits. "Hares are built for speed. They look like the sprinter, and rabbits look more like the (football) lineman," King says.

Hares' ears tend to be longer and thinner, with black markings at the tips.

Both animals face danger from predators and need strategies for quick escapes. "A hare escapes danger by running away," says King. "A rabbit will go underground."

Personality

Rabbits and hares behave in very different ways, according to King. "Hares are generally more aloof (distant), more prone to stress. They don't make as good pets. I like to think of them as the rabbit's 'wild cousin.'"

But getting back to where we started, what about Bugs Bunny? Is he a wabbit or a hare?

"From a physical standpoint, he's a hare," says King. "But from a social standpoint, he's a rabbit!"

Hare

Rabbit

Telling the difference between hares and rabbits can be difficult.

SPLITTING HAIRS

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Bucks and Does

The name for a male rabbit or hare is a buck. A female rabbit or hare is called a doe. A baby rabbit is a bunny or a kit (short for kitten). A baby hare is called a leveret (pronounced LEV-ur-it).

When Is a Rabbit Not a Rabbit?

You can't automatically tell a hare from a rabbit by an animal's common name. A jackrabbit is actually a hare, and a Belgian hare is really a rabbit. Talk about confusion!

The Need for Speed

Hares move really quickly. The European brown hare can run as fast as 45 miles per hour.

What's That You're Wearing?

A rabbit's fur is the same color year-round. A hare's coat changes from grayish brown in summer to white in winter.

The scoop on poop

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Here's a strange bit of information that most people don't know: Rabbits and hares eat their own droppings.

Both animals eat plants — grass and leafy weeds — which can be hard to digest. Like you, they need vitamins and protein, but their food passes through their systems too quickly for their bodies to absorb all the nutrients.

Rabbits and hares solve this problem by passing two distinctive types of feces (pronounced FEE-seez), or body waste: hard droppings and soft black pellets. The pellets are immediately eaten.

Here's how it works:

The chewed plant material collects in an area of the animals' digestive tract called the cecum (SEE-kum). The cecum contains bacteria that help break down food and produce vitamins. After the animal expels the soft pellets, they are eaten whole and digested again in a special part of the stomach. Most rabbits and hares do this only at night, which is why, if you have a pet rabbit, you probably have never seen it eating its poop.

This double-digestion process enables the animals to get the nutrients they might have missed during the first passage through their bodies.

Newsy number: 1,116

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

The number of unique proteins found in human saliva glands. The finding could lead to new spit-based medical tests (instead of drawing blood).

Read all about it

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

POOP: A Natural History of the Unmentionable

By Nicola Davies

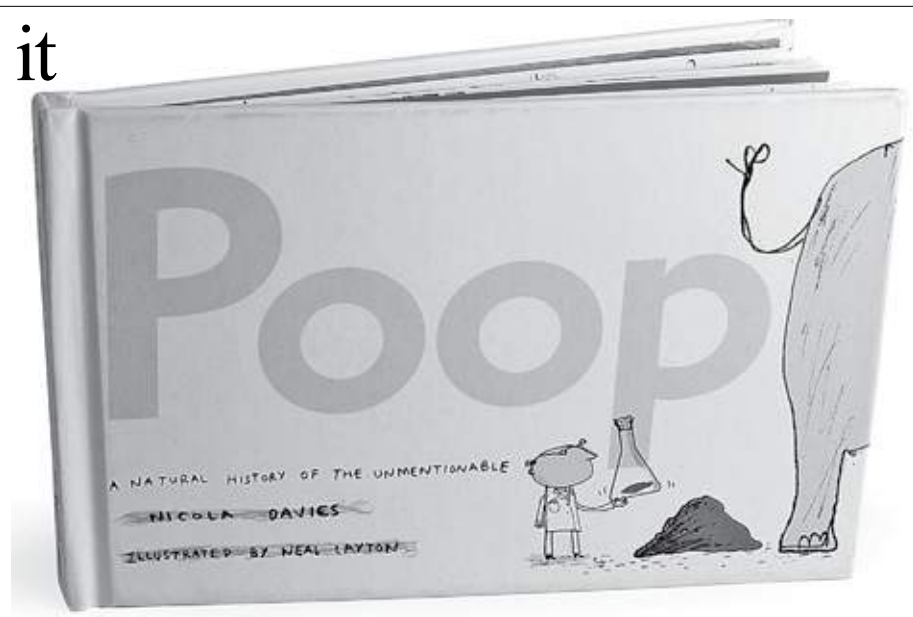
For ages 9-12

Koalas feed it to their babies. Tigers use it to mark their turf. Golden moles have a special room for it in their underground chambers. Termites make mushroom gardens with it. Beetles use it to plant trees. And millipedes and humans use it to build their nests and homes.

What is it? Poop, of course.

If you think what hares and rabbits do with their droppings is interesting, you will love this little encyclopedia of poopdom. It covers the waste habits of everything from ants to whales, from dinosaur times right up to your baby brother's diapers.

Your newfound knowledge will amaze your friends and gross out the adults in your life. Not bad for a book barely as big as a cowpie.



"Poop: A Natural History of the Unmentionable" offers kids the chance to amaze friends and gross out adults with fascinating facts about feces.

THE WASHINGTON POST

BOOK REVIEW

"No Talking," by Andrew Clements

Ages 9 and older

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Maybe you think that your class is the chattiest, noisiest ever. But have teachers and principals called you "The Unshushables" ever since kindergarten?

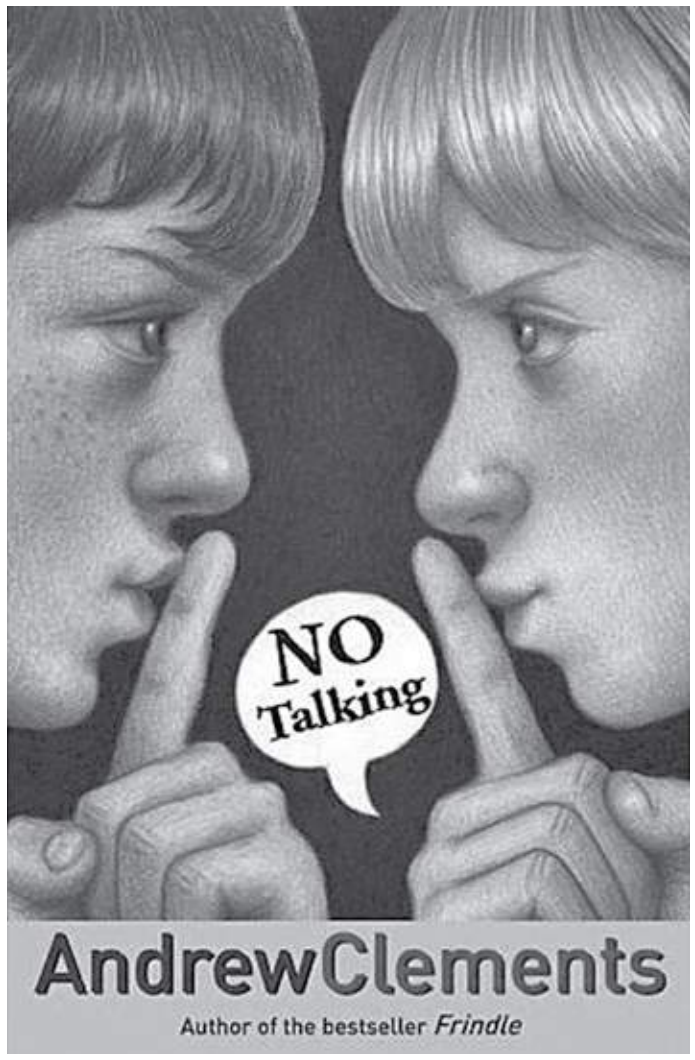
That's what Dave Packer's class has been nicknamed, and Dave is a prime reason. But then he reads about how Mahatma Gandhi, a political and spiritual leader in India, used to spend one day a week in silence to cleanse his soul. Dave finds this idea intriguing and gives it a try.

It doesn't take long for Dave's little experiment to become a boys-against-girls grudge match that has the entire fifth grade trying not to talk for 48 hours. (The kids come up with some clever ideas about what to do if a teacher asks a question, for example.) When The Unshushables suddenly become The Untalkables, the principal is forced to demand that students be loud in school.

"No Talking" is Andrew Clements' most thought-provoking and innovative book since 1996's "Frindle." (Many of you weren't even born then, so check it out of the library. It's the tale of a boy who changes the word "pen" to "frindle" in his school.) "No Talking" deals with some of the same issues: kids challenging authority, and teachers wrestling with their desire to have free-thinking students while not losing control of the school.

The best part of a Clements story is the dialogue, and that's true even in a book about *talking*. His characters sound, well, just like you.

In 2004 he shared with KidsPost his secret for getting characters to sound real: "I do my writing in a shed in my back yard, and if there were microphones in the walls it would be alarming. I spend a lot of time talking to myself. I say (all the dialogue I write) out loud."



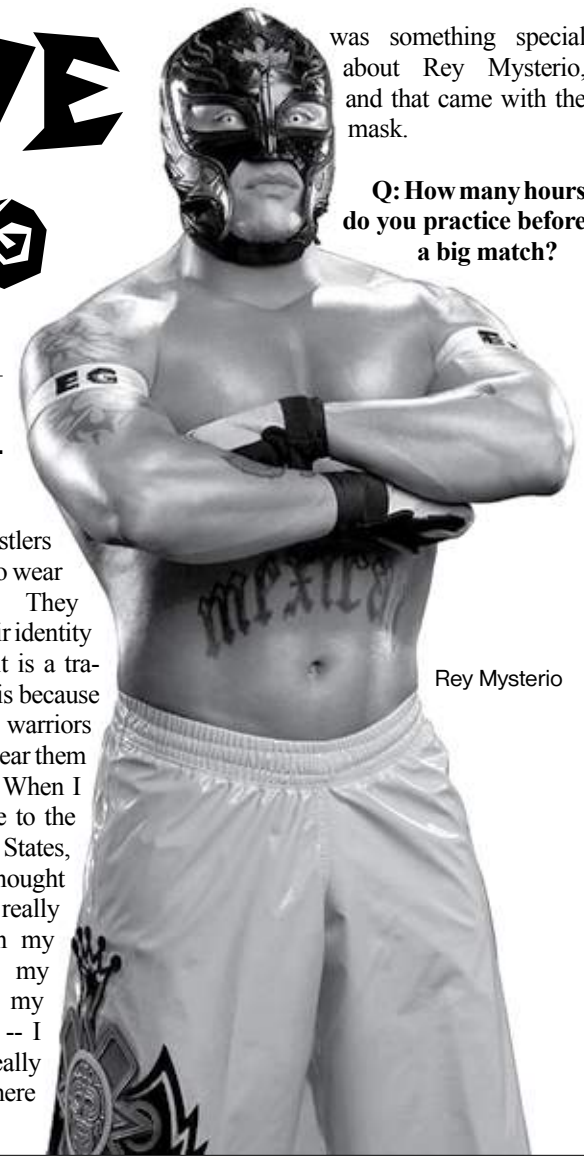
THE WASHINGTON POST

"No Talking" is Andrew Clements' most thought-provoking and innovative book since 1996's "Frindle."

Kids talk with WWE star Rey Mysterio

By Tyrell Feaster, Malika Khelawan and Diresh Sukhram
(C) 2008, NEWSDAY

We interviewed WWE star Rey Mysterio at the Toys 'R' Us store in Manhattan recently. His video game "Smackdown vs. Raw 08" is one of the best games we have played.


Rey Mysterio

Question: After your knee surgery were you worried about hurting your knee when you returned to wrestling?

Answer: Yes. I think I am always afraid to get hurt. This knee surgery that I had is just one. I will show you my scar Every time I step into the ring I pray that I don't get hurt; for myself and for my opponents. I just want to go out there and perform and make the audience feel good. When they walk out of the building and have them say, "Wow, that was really good. Rey Mysterio really tore it up tonight."

Q: Besides yourself, who is your favorite wrestler?

A: Growing up I had many. My uncle. I am a second-generation wrestler, you have Rey Mysterio Sr. He has always been an inspiration to me. I love watching WWE. I used to love watching Shawn Michaels. Shawn Michaels has always been one of my favorites.

Q: How did you learn to do the move 619?

A: That is the move I have been practicing for almost 10 years now. I have been wrestling for 18 years, and that move I think was first done by a wrestler named Tigermas who is a Japanese wrestler. I am talking about almost 25 years ago. Sometimes you see something and you just want to learn it. I don't want to say that I stole it, I just wanted to do a variation of that. The next thing I know I was putting opponents on the rope and I was doing the 619. I named it after the area code for San Diego, which is where I grew up.

Q: Why did you want to cover your face with a mask?

A: The mask has a lot of history. Growing up south of San Diego and in Tijuana, Mexico, I got to see a lot of Mucho Libre, that is what I grew up with. I have to say that 98 percent of the wrestlers in Mexico wear masks. They cover their identity because it is a tradition. It is because the Aztec warriors used to wear them in battle. When I first came to the United States, the fans thought it was really cool with my style, my size and my physique -- I wasn't really big, but there was something special about Rey Mysterio, and that came with the mask.

Q: How many hours do you practice before a big match?

A: I try to train my body at least an hour and a half a day. That is running or on a bicycle for a half-hour and I try to do an hour of weightlifting. That does not include eating. I have to eat about every three hours. If I don't, I get grumpy.

Q: Do you perform all your moves on the video game?

A: Yes. I think it is close to what you would get on TV. The only thing is, you get to do the moves that you want. That is pretty cool.

Q: Do you play the video game "Smackdown" with your children?

A: Why did you have to ask me that? I play against my son! We have a PSP, PlayStation2 at home. We have the Xbox and the Wii. It seems that my son spends more time playing than I do, because every time I sit down and play with him he always beats me. It is frustrating and it gets me mad!

DID YOU KNOW?

Rey Mysterio's original wrestling name was The Hummingbird. He took his name from his uncle, the original Rey Mysterio.

…with singer Sean Kingston

By Jennifer Bonilla, Mahoganie Hodges-Gardner and Keriann Kalb
(c) 2008, Newsday

We recently spoke with singer Sean Kingston at Epic Records in Manhattan. His most famous song is "Beautiful Girls."

Question: How has your life changed since becoming so popular?

Answer: Now I can hardly go places like the store or to get something to eat because there are always fans coming up to me.

Q: You grew up in Jamaica. What did you like best there?

A: The best thing about Jamaica is the beaches. The water is clear. I also like the food.

Q: What is your favorite Jamaican food?

A: Jerk chicken.

Q: Your grandfather was a well-known music producer in Jamaica. Did he help start your music career?

A: Yes. He took me to a lot of producers and (music) studios and introduced me to people. He also taught me about the industry and how to stay focused.

Q: Your song "Dry Your Eyes" is about your mom having to go to prison when you were younger. How did that experience change you?

A: It changed my life a lot. It opened my eyes, and I looked at life in a different way and took it more seriously.

Q: What's easier to do: write lyrics or perform in front of an audience?

A: Write lyrics!

Q: Your songs mix styles of music, including reggae, pop, hip-hop. What's your favorite to listen to?

A: I like to listen to all genres. The artists who have inspired me (include) Biggie (Smalls), Tupac (Shakur), Jay-Z, the Fugees, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye.

Q: What is your favorite song on your CD ("Sean Kingston") and why?

A: "Dry Your Eyes." Everything in the song is real and authentic. It came from the heart and is the most personal.

Q: If you could record a song with any music artist, who would you chose?

A: Chris Brown.

Q: You went to acting school when you were younger. Would you like to act, and, if so, who would you like to be your co-star?

A: I do want to do a lot of acting, do movies and (play) different roles.

I'd like to be in a movie with Denzel Washington.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I play basketball, I like to swim, I like to shop.

Q: What is your favorite sport and favorite professional team?

A: Football and the Miami Dolphins.

Q: Is there a place you haven't been that you want to visit?

A: Brazil.

Q: Where do you see your career heading in 10 years?

A: I see myself (starting) my own record label and launching careers of other artists.

Sean Kingston

...and with The Click 5

By Eric Riesel, Juliana Denrich and Dari Goldman
Kidsday Staff Reporters
(C) 2008, NEWSDAY

We interviewed The Click 5 at the Atlantic Records offices in Manhattan recently. The band's latest album is "Modern Minds and Pastimes."

The Click 5

Question: What makes this CD different from your other CD?

Joe Guese: Obviously, we have a new singer and our hair is longer.

Joey Zehr: You can really hear that on the record.

Joe: With this album, the songs have been written over the course of the past two years. Some of the songs were written before that. I would say the big difference is this album draws more off personal experiences, the ups and downs.

Q: How did you find Kyle Patrick?

Joe: Well, we lost the other guy somewhere. We just wanted to make a great record, and we wanted someone who was going to contribute to the band and be an impact member and really bring something. So we went back to our old school, Berklee College of Music, and asked some friend there if they knew anyone, and his name came up. We started hanging out with him and playing with him, and it was a lot of fun.

Q: What inspires you to write your music?

Joey: Probably just life in general; watching things around you. We got into music because a lot of our musical heroes wrote really good songs, like The Beatles. Joe and I don't write much, but we are inspired by everyday things. When you go on the road, you have a lot of intense experiences in the band and outside the band. Because it is a weird life to live, touring all the time.

Q: How long does it take to make a music video?

Joey: We usually take a day; maybe one to two days. The video we shot for "Jenny" -- you can see it on our Web site -- we shot it when we were in Brooklyn and that took a day. It is a really cool process, and there are a lot of people working on it. We hire friends for everything that we do and it is kind of not as professional because we would rather have our friends involved. But you go onto a set like that, and they would have 50 people hired.

Q: When you were a kid, did you think you were going to grow up and be in a famous band?

Joe: I don't think our goal was to be famous. I really liked bands and music and playing guitar; it's been kind of a natural progression. It's that we start playing a guitar, then start a band, then go to music school.

Q: If you weren't in a band what would you do?

Joey: I have to be involved in music, maybe I would work here. I don't know if we are ever not going to be in bands. I am sure that even if we had to do something else we would still be in bands.

Q: What advice could you give to a kid who has just started to play the guitar?

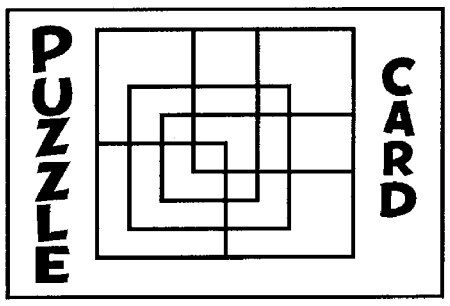
Joe: Practice. Start a band, or just play with your friends.

Joey: Practice, as annoying as it is, pays off. You just have to find your way to really like it. The best thing you can do if you are a musician is to get involved with the musical community.

Junior Whirl

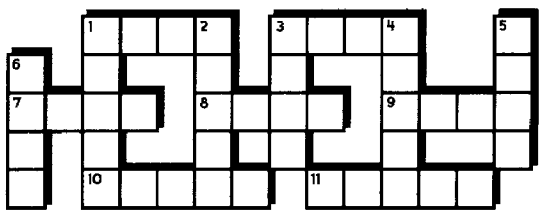
by Charles Barry Townsend

PUZZLE CARD



YOU HAVE TWO MINUTES to count all of the squares in the above drawing

Answer: 17 squares



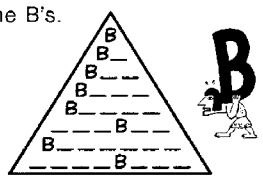
SEE IF YOU CAN make this math expression correct by inserting three plus signs and one minus sign between the numbers:

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 = 100

Answer: 98 - 76 + 54 + 3 + 21 = 100

THE 'B' PYRAMID! As you move down the word pyramid shown here, each word contains the same letters as the word above it, plus a new letter. We give you all the B's. Here are some hints from the top down:

1. Blood type (given).
2. To exist.
3. A wager.
4. To defeat.
5. A whining complaint.
6. Home to animals.
7. Shattered apart.
8. Type of trucks.



Answers: The words are b, be, bet, beat, bleat, stable, blasted, flatbeds.

A PET PARADE PUZZLE!

Pictured above is a crossword puzzle grid. Below are words pertaining to cats and dogs that you will need to complete the puzzle, using the trial-and-error method. Try to finish before chow time!

4-letter words		5-letter words
BRED	SHED	FLEAS
BULL	SHOW	LEASH
HEEL	TAIL	LITHE
OBEY	YELP	SMELL
		WOOFS

Answers: (Across) 1. Show. 3. Bull. 7. Heel. 8. Obey. 9. Tail. 10. Leash. 11. Fleas. (Down) 1. Smell. 2. Woofs. 3. Bred. 4. Lithe. 5. Yelp. 6. Shed.

©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Keeping your hamster healthy

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: How can I tell if my hamster is sick? —Damian J., Washington, D.C.

DEAR DAMIAN: The best way to tell if your pet hamster is not feeling well is to be familiar with its habits. While hamsters have common behaviors, each one also has individual traits that only an attentive owner will notice.

A healthy hamster's common behaviors include:

■ Stretching, yawning and quickly grooming its fur as soon as it wakes up.

■ Being inquisitive—raising its nose in the air and vibrating its whiskers -- when you open the cage door to give it food.

■ Busy activity at regular times—filling its cheeks with food, exploring the cage environment, playing with toys or hopping on the exercise wheel.

You can tell a healthy hamster from physical signs, too. The next time you hold your hamster, check it out. Look for bright, shiny eyes with no discharge in the corners; a smooth, sleek, satiny coat; a dry, not runny, nose; and a dry anal area.

Sick hamsters will look and act much differently, with dull eyes and ratty coats, and often will not move much or show the same interest in things. They should be looked at immediately by the vet, as these small creatures can quickly become seriously ill and die without help.

Keep your hamster healthy by making sure it has a great environment. Clean its cage every week and wash or replace its bedding. Keep the cage out of drafty, cold areas, and change its drinking water daily. Provide lots of chew toys and an exercise wheel. Pay your hamster regular attention, not only so it has regular stimulation, but also to accustom it to being held.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

© 2008 King Features Synd., Inc.

Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ Studies show that the average visitor to the crown jewel of the United States national park system spends just 15 minutes actually looking at the Grand Canyon.

■ The next time you're drinking to someone's health, you can tell your fellow imbibers that the word "toast" originated in ancient Rome. It was the custom there to put a small piece of spiced and burned bread into a cup of wine in order to absorb any sediment and improve the drink's taste.

■ Experts on ants claim that the insects hate vinegar.

■ It was American novelist, short-story writer and essayist Flannery O'Connor who made the following comment on her craft: "Everywhere I go I'm asked if I think the university stifles writers. My opinion is that they don't stifle enough of them. There's many a bestseller that could have been prevented by a good teacher."

■ When you picture the quintessential pirate, you imagine him with at least one gold earring, right? Ear-piercing was common among pirates, but it wasn't entirely for decorative purposes: It was claimed that it improved eyesight. That assertion was scoffed at for centuries, but it turns out there may have been some truth to it. Those who study acupuncture say that the spot on the earlobe where piercings are done corresponds to the auricular point, which controls the eyes.

■ Those who study such things claim that hot water weighs more than cold water does.

■ Only one person in history has been both president of the United States and the country's chief justice, but I won't hold it against you if you can't name him. Not many people remember much from their schoolday lessons about William Howard Taft.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Women who seek to be equal with men lack ambition." —Timothy Leary

© 2008 King Features Synd., Inc.

MAGIC MAZE ● — STACK(S)

K	K	H	E	B	Y	W	T	R	O	L	J	D	G	E
E	K	A	C	N	A	P	B	Y	W	E	N	U	E	R
S	E	N	O	W	O	L	B	P	C	A	W	K	N	K
I	G	D	N	B	Z	I	X	N	S	H	O	R	T	V
S	Q	O	T	M	K	B	E	K	I	M	D	P	N	Y
G	E	C	A	A	Y	R	C	O	S	W	H	U	E	E
S	Q	P	I	N	E	A	L	O	J	H	S	F	V	N
E	C	A	N	F	T	R	E	B	O	R	U	Y	X	M
V	U	S	E	S	Q	Y	P	N	M	Y	P	K	J	I
H	F	R	R	E	I	F	I	L	P	M	A	E	C	H
B	Z	Y	X	V	U	T	R	Q	P	O	M	H	L	C

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Amplifier	Container	Pancake	Short
Blow one's	Hay	Push-down	Stacks and
Book	Library	Reference	Vent
Chimney	Open	Robert	

©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	÷		+		10
x		x		+	
	x		−		16
−		+		+	
	x		+		17
10		10		24	

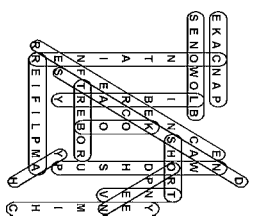
1 2 3 4 4 6 7 8 9

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult ★★★ GO FIGURE!

© 2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



— STACK(S)

GO FIGURE ANSWER

3	÷	1	+	7	10
x		x		+	
4	x	6	−	8	16
−		+		+	
2	x	4	+	9	17
10		10		24	

Upside down and backward April Fools' fun

Have you ever had a crazy, mixed-up day where life feels upside down, backward and inside out? With April Fools' Day around the corner, start planning some capers and silly surprises to create such an off-kilter day for your family. You'll be making memories the kids will never forget.

Here are some ideas to get the wacky side of your brain stimulated for April 1st:

■ Come to the breakfast table wearing clothes inside out and backward.

■ Say common phrases backward, such as "Fools April Happy."

■ Make school sandwiches inside out, with bread on the inside and cold cuts and mustard on the outside.

■ Write a lunchbox note with letters reversed in each word.

■ Walk to the bus stop backward, or if you carpool, sing a round, such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," backward.

■ Serve dinner with dessert first and make it an ice-cream sundae. Upside down of course. Here's how:

Set a maraschino cherry, which would normally be at the top of the sundae, at the bottom of a parfait glass. Wedge a round cookie to fit snuggly near the bottom just above the cherry. Carefully break off the outer edge to fit if necessary.

Add big dollops of whipped cream on the cookie. Finally, add ice-cream scoops. Set spoon upside down in the ice cream and serve the upside-down sundae.

■ At bedtime, read a backward fairy tale to your kids.

Have you ever cheated and read the last page of a book first, just to see how it all comes out? Maybe that is why "The End" by David LaRochelle (Scholastic 2007) is so delightful, because he does it for you—no guilt. The book starts at the end of the story and cleverly explains why the book ends—or begins—the way it does.

Confused? Your child will find it great fun, but please don't read the last page first. Start from the beginning, which is the end—I think. For more information about the book and the author, check out www.davidlarochelle.net.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

© 2008 Donna Erickson
Distributed by King Features Synd.

Life & Style

T.I. pleads guilty to weapons charges

ATLANTA (AP)—Rapper T.I. pleaded guilty Thursday to federal weapons possession charges, and will receive a sentence that includes prison time after he completes a period of community service.

In the year that he is awaiting sentencing, T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, must complete at least 1,000 hours of a total 1,500 hours of community service, talking to youth groups about the pitfalls of guns, gangs and drugs.

He will be sentenced to serve about 12 months in prison after completing the community service, officials said. His prison time could be increased or reduced, depending on his fulfillment of the terms of the deal and good behavior, they said.

Harris, 27, who was dressed in a gray business suit, told the judge he understands the terms of the agreement.

He pleaded guilty to possession of unregistered machine guns and silencers, unlawful possession of machine guns and possession of firearms by a convicted felon.

Harris is one of pop music's most successful artists. His sixth album, "T.I. vs. T.I.P.," was released July 3, debuting at No. 1. He appeared in the 2007 film "American Gangster," which starred Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe.

AP

T.I. arrives at the 2007 pre-BET Awards dinner and party in Los Angeles in this June 25, 2007, file photo.

U.S. Attorney David Nahmias said Harris will remain "under strict bond conditions" during the next year.

He said Harris' sentencing was deferred "to allow him to perform a unique and extensive program—at least 1,000 hours—of community service. That service will focus on using his high public visibility and his talents to tell at-risk young people about the mistakes he has made and to educate them about the dangers of violence, guns, gangs and drugs."

Nahmias said under the agreement, Harris will have to serve a year in prison and three years of supervised home detention, perform a total of 1,500 hours of community service and pay a $100,000 fine.

Failure to fulfill his obligations will net Harris a "much longer prison sentence," Nahmias said.

Harris spoke to the media briefly after the hearing.

'X-Files' creator spills film details

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The truth about "The X-Files" sequel—some of it, anyway—is now out there.

"X-Files" creator Chris Carter, writer Frank Spotnitz and other crew members gathered Wednesday to discuss the TV series—and declassify some information about the upcoming film.

The popular Fox paranormal drama, which aired from 1993 to 2002, starred David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson as FBI agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully

"While this is not a mythology movie, it's true to everything that's come before," Spotnitz said at the William S. Paley Television Festival. "It's true to Mulder and Scully, who they are and where they would be this point in their lives and all of the experiences that they've had."

The series first made the leap to the big screen with 1998's "The X-Files: Fight the Future." Plans for another film were grounded in 2005 when Carter sued Fox over syndication profits for the show. The lawsuit was later settled.

Carter, who also directs the new movie, said it takes place in the present and uses a story envisioned when the series ended. While the show's sprawling alien mythology isn't part of the plot, Carter said there is a reference to Scully's seemingly supernatural son, William, who was born in season eight and later given up for adoption.

The film is due out July 25.

Carter was tightlipped about the title.

"I can't tell you," he said. "I know what I want it to be, but Fox has some ideas of their own."

'Nuremberg' screenwriter Abby Mann dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Abby Mann, writer of socially conscious scripts for movies and television and winner of the 1961 Academy Award for adapted screenplay for "Judgment at Nuremberg," has died at 80.

Writers Guild of America spokesman Gregg Mitchell said Mann died Tuesday. The cause of death was not given.

Mann also won multiple Emmys, including one in 1973 for "The Marcus-Nelson Murders," which created a maverick New York police detective named Theo Kojak. The film, starring Telly Salavas, was spun off into the long-running TV series "Kojak."

AP

Abby Mann is seen in this undated file photo.

Rapper Remy Ma is convicted of assault

NEW YORK (AP)—Grammy-nominated rapper Remy Ma was led out of a Manhattan courtroom Thursday, weeping and in handcuffs, after being convicted of shooting a woman outside a nightclub last summer.

The defense had conceded that Remy Ma, whose real name is Remy Smith, fired a shot toward a friend she suspected of stealing $3,000, but said it was an accident.

Smith, 26, faces up to 25 years in prison following her conviction in state Supreme Court for assault, weapon possession and attempted coercion.

She was nominated for a Grammy as part of the Terror Squad for the 2004 hit "Lean Back." She also has appeared on recordings with Busta Rhymes and Eminem.

Smith quietly wiped away tears as the verdict was read, then wailed loudly and sobbed openly after she was outside the courtroom. Many of her supporters also cried.

A few supporters of Makeda Barnes Joseph, the woman who was shot, cheered and wept when they heard the verdict. Some chanted "bye, bye" in an almost taunting singsong as Smith left the courtroom.

Justice Rena Uviller, denying a request by defense lawyer Ivan Fisher, ordered Smith jailed without bail while awaiting sentencing on April 23.

She was acquitted of witness tampering and gang assault, charges related to a nightclub attack in the New York City borough of the Bronx on the boyfriend of a witness who ultimately testified against her. A man who tried to help the boyfriend also was beaten.

Joseph was shot after a party at a nightclub in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood on July 14, 2007.

Assistant District Attorney Michael McIntosh said the defendant "took an illegal .45-caliber automatic and loaded it with hollow-point bullets," then used both hands to cock the weapon as she got into the car. "She took every step you had to take to shoot somebody," the prosecutor said.

The rapper demanded that Joseph dump the contents of her purse; Joseph denied she had taken the rapper's money and refused. Fisher said the gun went off accidentally as the women struggled over the bag.

Brothers' checkered history remains hidden from family

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My oldest brother, "Harry," has been dealing with drug and alcohol issues for more than 30 years. While I am not wealthy by any standards, barring any major catastrophes, my wife and I will be comfortable in our retirement.

Harry's adult kids are having problems taking care of him, and they, as well as my other adult siblings, seem to think I am "harsh and callous" for not helping.

What they don't know is that, as a child, Harry sexually abused me, and when I was in my 20s and in the military stationed overseas, he slept with my (now ex-) wife. What they have also conveniently forgotten is that a few years ago, I gave Harry several thousand dollars' worth of equipment to start a business. Instead of starting the business, he sold the equipment to buy booze and drugs.

Am I being too harsh? If not, how many of the details should I reveal to let the family know why I feel so little compassion?

—FED UP IN TEXAS

DEAR FED UP: Perhaps it's time you got it ALL off your chest. Considering everything that has transpired, I don't think you're being harsh or callous by not chipping in. And I see no reason why you should remain silent about the way you have been sexually and financially abused by your brother.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my husband for 17 years—married to him for 10—and we still have our ups and downs.

Two years ago I was drinking a lot. We separated for a few months, but still slept with each other occasionally. My husband ended up sleeping with a co-worker and got her pregnant. I was devastated; however, we worked it out and stayed together.

But it's no longer the same. He tells me he loves me all the time, but sometimes I feel he's not happy with me and wants to be free. It's hard for me to trust him because he's still working with her.

My husband tells me he doesn't see her that often because he works in a warehouse and she's in the office. But it still makes me feel insecure.

How can I make things the way they used to be, before all of this?

—HURT IN SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

DEAR HURT: You can't make things the way they used to be because they are not the way they used to be. Rather than dwelling so much on the past, you should focus on the fact that your husband made his choice when he reconciled with you. If he didn't really love you, wild horses couldn't have dragged him back to you.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have known this man I'll call "Jesse" for 11 years, but I feel like I really don't know him at all. I have asked many people this question, but no one can give me an answer. Why would a man always answer a question with a question?

—JUST ANSWER THE QUESTION

DEAR JUST: A person who always answers a question with a question is someone who wants to avoid giving a straight answer.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

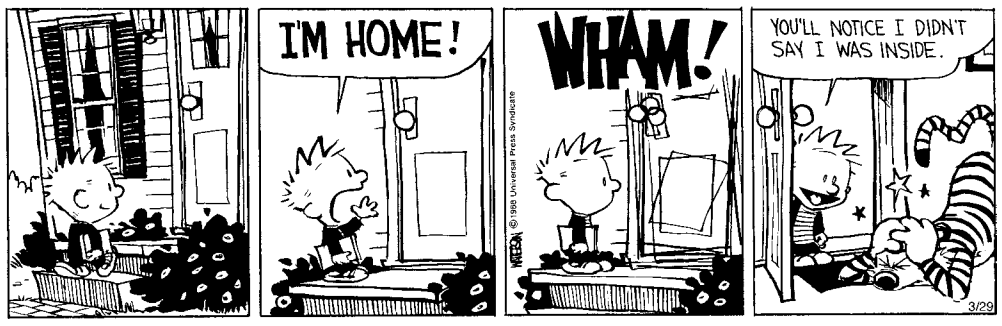
■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable -- and most frequently requested -- poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby -- Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

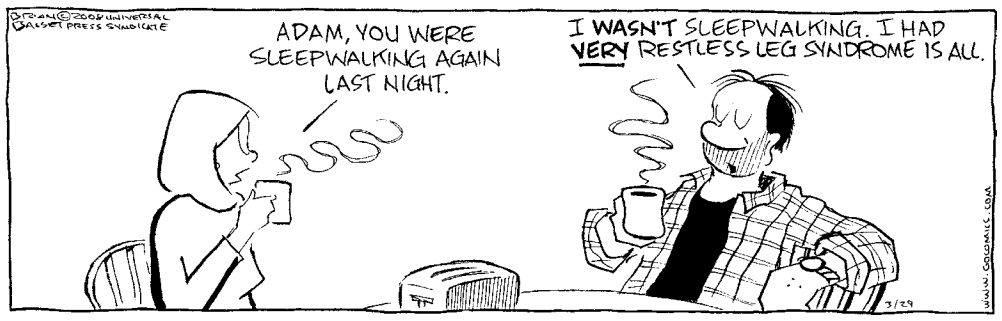


Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

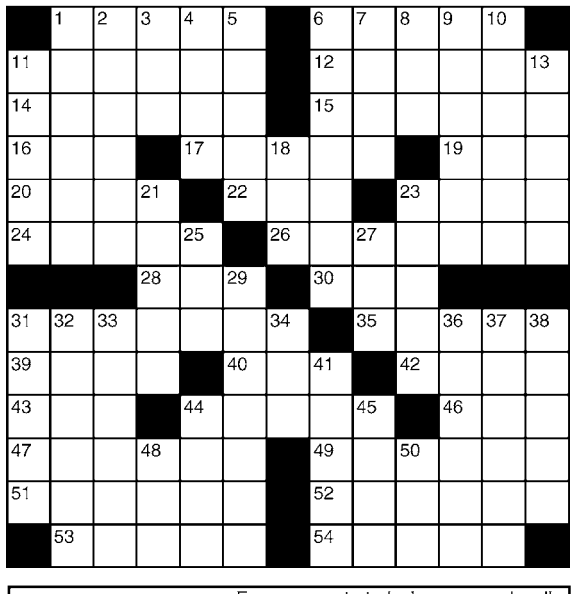
ACROSS
1 Outburst of indignation
6 Pursuing
11 Harsh
12 More lascivious
14 Strapless purse
15 Squat
16 Every last iota
17 Home run legend
19 Prompt
20 Burden
22 "Poppycock!"
23 Small plateau
24 Nerd
26 Hair ointments
28 Pen point
30 Actor Herbert
31 Adorn gaudily
35 Roll with a hole
39 Pre-diploma hurdle
40 Boundary (Abbr.)
42 Ganges wrap
43 Have a bug
44 West —, Wis.
46 Predetermine the outcome
47 Grit your teeth
49 House of worship
51 Straight
52 Iterate
53 Bo-Peep's charges
54 Brewers' ovens

DOWN
1 Chap
2 Palatal danglers
3 Pensioned (Abbr.)
4 Killer whale
5 Betty Ford Center goings-on
6 Booze
7 Flowerless plant
8 One and the same?
9 Brought out
10 Disqualify (oneself)
11 Nearly boil
13 Ostriches' look-alikes
18 50 Cent piece
21 Jeans material
23 Half a 1960s quartet
25 Occupation, for short
27 Crowd
29 Hotel staffer
31 Summer vacation venue
32 Banishes
33 Fourth Hebrew letter
34 Zero
36 Attic
37 Jong and Kane
38 Frivolous
41 Very small
44 Farm fraction
45 Flushing stadium
48 Society-page word
50 Boom times

Solution time: 27 mins.

M	I	T	T	S		D	O	T		S	P	A
A	T	E	I	N		O	D	E		H	A	S
R	O	D	E	O		N	O	X	I	O	U	S
		I	R	O	N	E	R		M	A	L	E
C	O	O		T	A	I		S	P	L	A	T
A	R	U	G		I	N	T	R	O			
R	E	S	E	L	L		H	O	R	D	E	S
			M	I	S	E	R		T	U	B	A
H	A	B	I	T		R	O	B		B	B	C
O	W	E	N		H	A	W	A	I	I		
V	A	R	I	O	U	S		S	C	O	U	T
E	R	E		A	G	E		S	O	U	S	A
L	E	T		F	O	R		O	N	S	E	T

Yesterday's answer 3-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Hideaki Takizawa, 26; Jennifer Capriati, 32; Elle Macpherson, 45; Bud Cort, 60

Happy Birthday: Don't let anger be your downfall. Put whatever differences you have aside and do your best to excel. Concentrate on the little things that can make a difference. Stay calm, react quietly and keep everyone who knows you guessing. Only then will you have the upper hand. Your numbers are 4, 16, 20, 36, 42, 47

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): A new hobby or pastime will help to ease your stress and allow you the opportunity to develop a new skill. Someone is likely to dangle something in front of your face but not give you the opportunity to take part. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): The more you do to instigate an activity, event or get together, the more recognition you will get. You can write your own ticket if you stay active, involved and a dynamo in the suggestion and solutions department. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't trust anyone with your money, your ideas or your partner. Someone you respect will give you a warning; be sure to take it seriously. A settlement, found money or a gift appear to be heading your way. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Consider what's being offered but don't be too eager to sign on the dotted line. Write down what you feel your responsibilities should be and what you want in return. Patience will pay off. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Put in a little extra time if there are things you don't fully understand. A trip to do a little personal investigation will pay off. Don't trust what others tell you; find out for yourself. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): By all means, enjoy the moment. Relax with friends and take part in things that will build your enthusiasm. Love and romance are heading your way and decisions that will influence your future are about to unfold. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Avoid feuds or prepare to face trouble. Socialize with friends or do something that will help you get ahead or feel good about the way you look and feel. A spa or an art or cooking class will help you get over the stress you've been having. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You can fall in love, renew your vows or plan a very eventful day that will leave you filled with memories. A change in your outlook will allow you to do something that you may have been reluctant to do in the past. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You may think you are fooling everyone but you are more transparent than you realize. Let everyone know how you feel and what you need so that things are more suited to your needs. You will make headway. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You may be a soft touch when you love someone but that doesn't mean you should let him or her bamboozle you into doing something you don't feel right about. Emotional pressure will lead to arguments and bad feelings. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Do something nice for someone else or lend your time or services to a group you want to help out. You will meet someone who has something to offer you in return. A partnership can develop from a light conversation.

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): The option to do or not do will be yours but if you look at what's required, it will be worth your while to move forward. A chance to deal with someone from your past or a person who has the clout to help you get ahead is apparent. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are quick to react and emotionally sensitive. You are strong, dedicated to your beliefs and opportunistic. You are unpredictable, clever and use your charm wisely.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5			9				
3					2		5	
			6	7				
		5	3				1	
6		9				3		7
	8				4	6		
				5	6			
	1		4					9
				3			2	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	3	4	8	7	6	1	9	2
1	8	6	2	4	9	7	5	3
9	2	7	5	3	1	8	6	4
8	4	5	1	2	3	9	7	6
2	9	1	6	8	7	4	3	5
7	6	3	9	5	4	2	1	8
3	7	2	4	1	5	6	8	9
4	5	9	7	6	8	3	2	1
6	1	8	3	9	2	5	4	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/28

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS **Solution: 9 letters**

P	N	E	F	P	C	P	U	R	P	O	S	E	Y	C
T	O	I	M	O	R	L	O	C	K	E	R	B	H	O
S	O	S	A	O	O	A	L	O	S	E	G	A	P	O
C	T	C	I	T	C	T	C	U	S	U	M	S	O	R
H	H	R	S	T	P	T	B	T	R	P	R	S	R	D
E	B	L	O	A	I	A	U	A	I	O	U	O	T	I
D	E	T	E	P	M	O	C	O	L	C	E	C	R	N
U	W	A	C	B	S	E	N	O	P	L	E	C	U	A
L	I	H	O	R	G	S	c	S	L	E	D	E	O	T
E	N	Y	U	E	H	I	S	I	A	A	A	R	C	E
E	S	L	L	I	u	T	K	E	Y	D	O	G	Z	R
R	E	L	P	b	N	S	C	H	E	E	R	I	N	G
O	O	A	S	I	N	N	E	T	R	R	S	R	R	A
C	S	R	O	E	V	E	N	T	S	S	S	L	U	M
S	S	P	I	H	S	R	A	L	O	H	C	S	T	E

© 2008 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 3/29

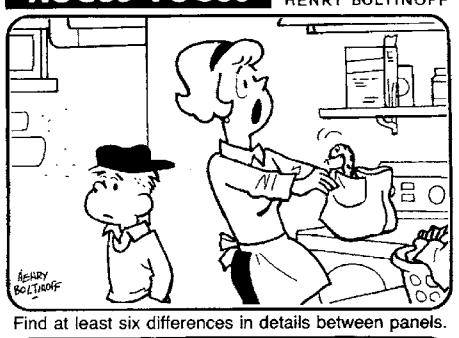
Boys, Buses, Captain, Championship, Cheering, Club, Coach, College, Colors, Compete, Coordinate, Court, Cups, Events, Football, Game, Girls, Leaders, Locker, Lose, Mascot, Outcome, Pass, Players, Points, Positions, Practice, Purpose, Rally, Road, Rugby, Rule, Schedule, Scholarships, Score, Size, Skill, Soccer, Sports, Tennis, Trophy, Turn, Wins

Yesterday's Answer: Hooks

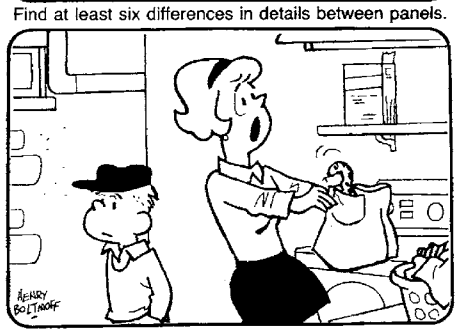
We listened to your requests! **TREASURY #6** is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Apron is missing. 2. Boy's cap is turned forward. 3. Shorts are longer. 4. Items are missing from shelf. 5. There are more wall bricks. 6. Pipe is lower on wall.

©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Wishing Well®

2	5	4	3	5	3	6	4	6	5	7	2	7
C	A	E	H	C	E	G	A	I	T	T	O	R
3	8	3	4	5	3	8	2	5	3	2	4	2
A	A	L	G	I	T	N	N	V	H	T	E	E
3	2	5	4	5	6	4	7	2	5	8	3	7
H	N	I	R	T	V	T	U	T	Y	E	I	T
3	5	4	2	7	2	4	3	7	3	5	2	7
G	H	O	E	H	D	L	H	A	L	I	L	L
3	5	3	6	7	2	7	3	6	5	3	6	3
I	G	G	E	W	I	A	H	G	H	T	O	E
2	3	7	4	6	7	6	8	2	6	7	4	7
F	D	Y	E	O	S	D	W	E	A	W	A	I
8	4	6	7	8	6	7	6	4	6	8	6	8
D	R	D	N	A	V	S	I	N	C	W	E	N

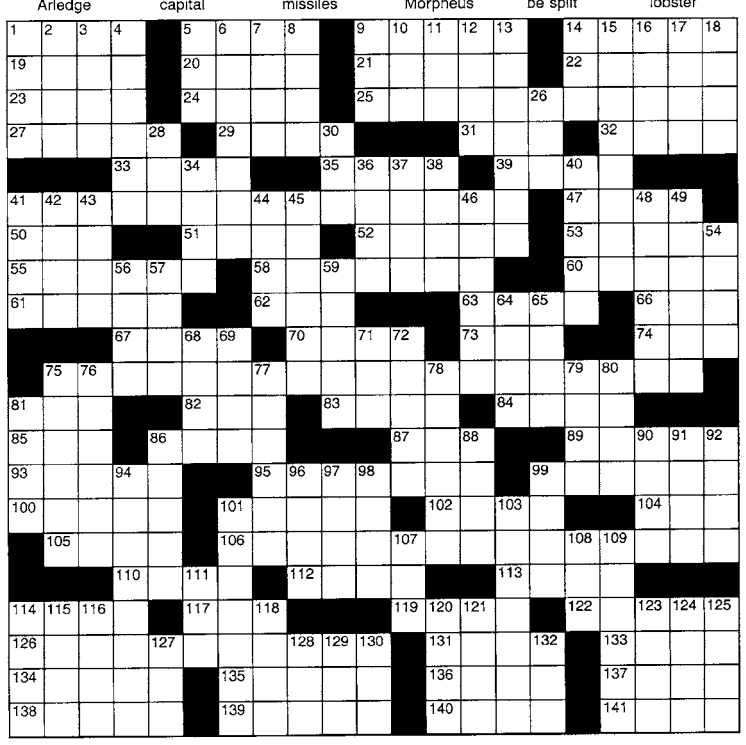
HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Super Crossword

ACROSS
1 Stromboli spew
5 "Waterloo" rockers
9 Envelops
14 Gaiters
19 Mideastern muck-a-muck
20 Spooky Stoker
21 Disprove
22 Let
23 General Bradley
24 Rustic tower
25 Start of a remark by 126 Across
27 Athenian sage
29 Indian sectarian
31 Airport abbr.
32 Good-sized
33 Author Jessamyn
35 With 81 Down, '44 chemistry Nobelist
39 Hatch's home
41 Part 2 of remark
47 TV's "The Love —"
50 Santa —, CA
51 "Oh, woe!"
52 TV exec Arledge
53 Citified
55 Like a dachshund
58 Cozy cloth
60 Marten
61 — bear
62 Asian holiday
63 Skilled
66 Scottsboro's st.
67 Rubberneck
70 Morlocks' prey
73 Mexican Mrs.
74 Point
75 Part 3 of remark
81 Crone
82 R-V hookup
83 Head for the clouds
84 Actress Purviance
85 Khan opener?
86 ER exclamation
87 Minify a midi, maybe?
89 Top-drawer
93 Feeling
95 Like a gymnast
99 5 Across' home
100 Michael of "Dynasty"
101 Schell or Shriver
102 European capital
104 Foster's "— Dog Tray"
105 Half-baked?
106 End of remark
110 McGregor of "Trainspotting"
112 Creme — creme
113 Bathday cake?
114 — League
117 Fond du —, WI
119 Metric measure
122 Pulsate
126 Speaker of remark
131 Writer Rendell
133 Autumn implement
134 Boredom
135 Draw forth
136 Exercise aftermath
137 Brute
138 Prepares cherries
139 Hazardous gas
140 — tetra
141 Tide type

DOWN
1 Composer Janacek
2 Bullets, briefly
3 Lab vessel
4 Cupid's missiles
5 Pecs' partners
6 "The — Stomp" ('61 hit)
7 Part of Indonesia
8 Out of control
9 Twisted
10 Rock's — Speedwagon
11 — Dhabi
12 Purple hue
13 Lawyer's concern
14 Bando of baseball
15 Excess
16 Jai —
17 Haynes or Rundgren
18 Fluctuate
26 "Unforgettable" name
28 Born
30 Torrid
34 Corset part
36 Aquatic bird
37 '82 Jeff Bridges film
38 Hautboy
40 Liplash?
41 Door hardware
42 In the know
43 Julia of "Havana"
44 Float
45 In the arms of Morpheus
46 Loosen the ropes
48 Conductor Claudio
49 Fat stuff
54 Shipshape
56 Unfashionable eyewear?
57 Wild child
59 Reference volume
64 Soft cheese
65 Arrive at Kennedy
68 "Yo!" at the library
69 Singer James
71 Lennon's lady
72 "My Own Private —" ('91 film)
75 Endangered feline
76 Kampala's country
77 Sheriff's quarry
78 Aftershock
79 Had no doubts
80 Patriot Nathan
81 See 35 Across
86 Creature for taming?
88 Kid's creation?
90 Matinee —
91 Reveal
92 They may be split
94 It's all in your head
96 Angered
97 Location
98 Comic Mort
99 Mediocre
101 Superintendent
103 Basutoland, today
107 Acorn, eventually
108 Welcome item?
109 "Silkwood" screenwriter
111 Flagon filler
114 Very long time
115 Flat rate
116 Excellent
118 Musical finale
120 Where to speak Farsi
121 Last name in publishing
123 Frenzy
124 Creole veggie
125 Freeway sound
127 "Platoon" extras
128 "Father Knows Best" kid
129 Author Umberto
130 Actor Cariou
132 Lady lobster



©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

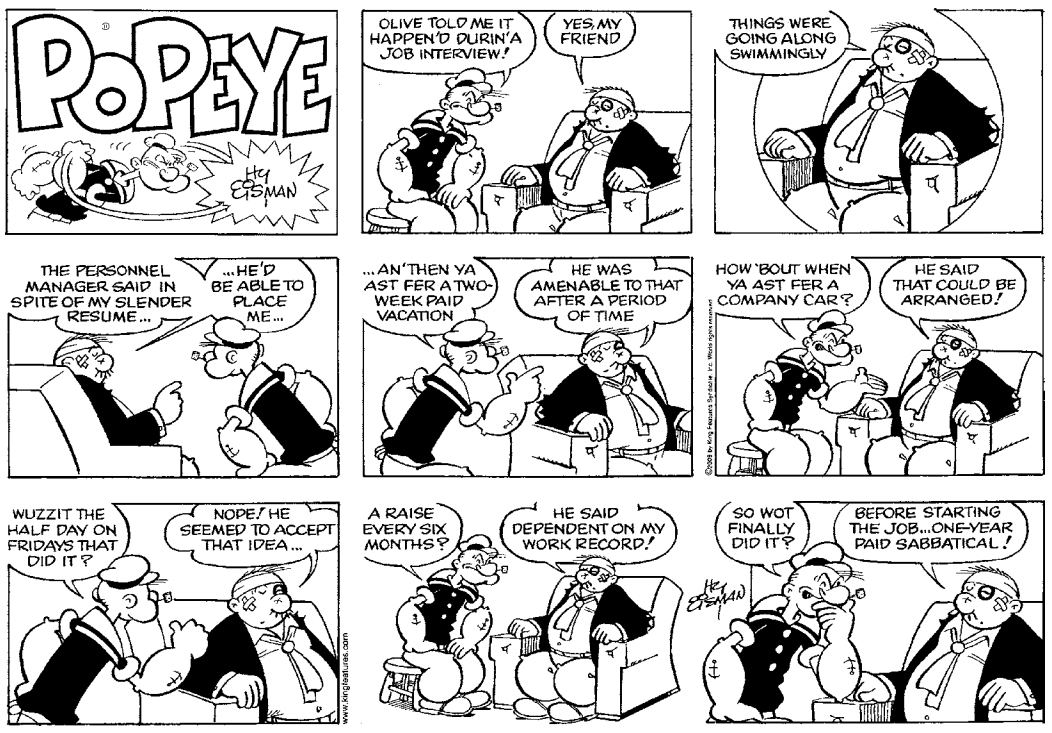
Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. HISTORY: Who wrote a series of pamphlets during and after the Revolutionary War that was titled "The American Crisis"?
2. MOVIES: Where does the film "Casablanca" take place?
3. MEDICAL: What disease also has been known as "the great pox"?
4. LITERATURE: The novel "The Murder at the Vicarage" introduced which mystery detective?
5. SCIENCE: What are ocean tides called at their lowest levels?
6. U.S. STATES: What is Hawaii's state bird?
7. GAMES: How many pieces does each backgammon player receive at the start?
8. MYTHOLOGY: What was the name of the whirlpool that swallowed ships whole in "The Odyssey"?
9. BIBLE: What was the name of Moses' wife?
10. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Scotland?

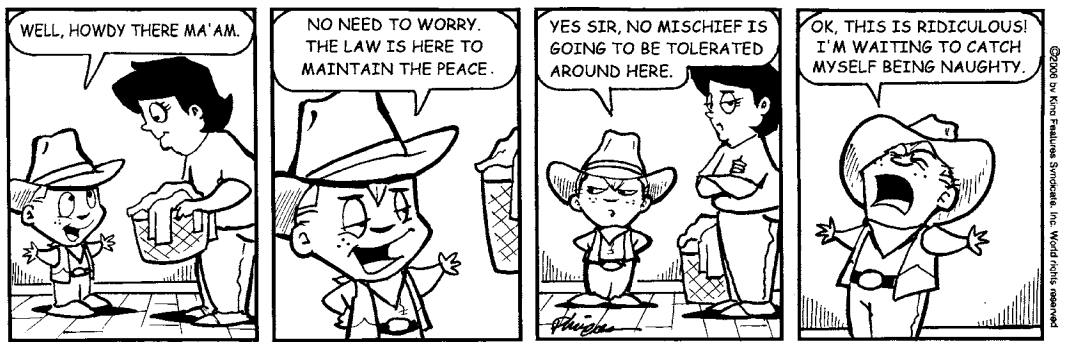
Answers
1. Thomas Paine
2. Morocco
3. Syphilis
4. Miss Marple, by Agatha Christie
5. Neap tides
6. The nene or Hawaiian goose
7. 15
8. Charybdis
9. Zipporah
10. Edinburgh

© 2008 King Features Synd., Inc.

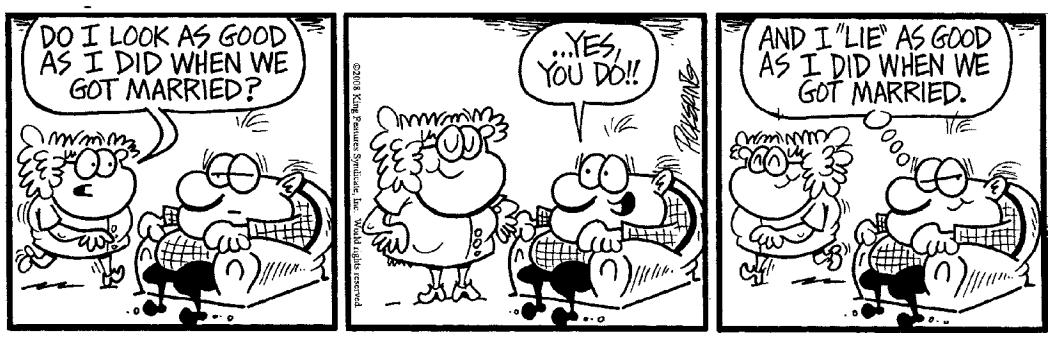
Saturday's Answers

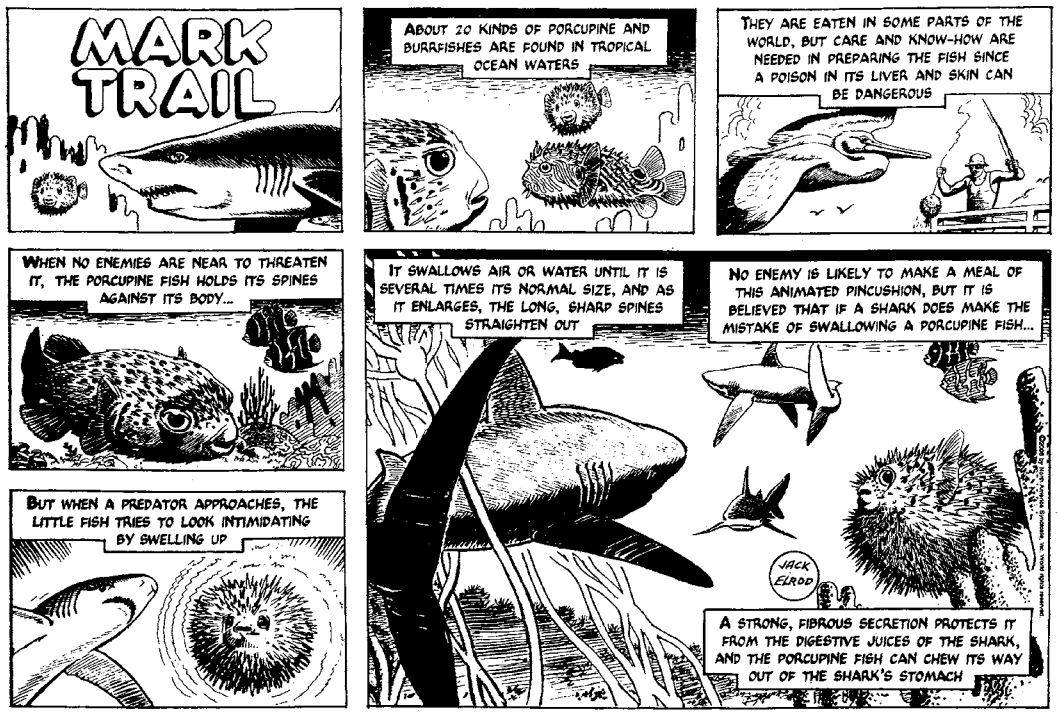


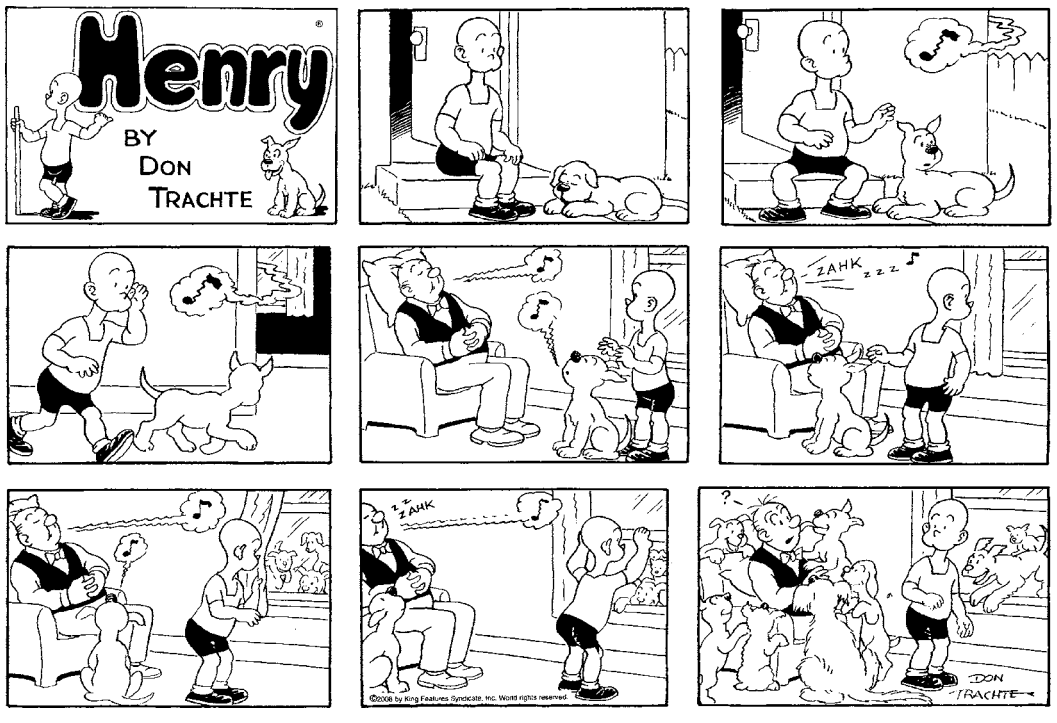
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats by Jeff Pickering







CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

1st position	**$13.00**
2nd position	**$5.00**
Succeeding positions	**$2.00**

These rates apply to all job vacancy announcements on Saipan that include corresponding benefits and positions that are all under the same company name and dba.

Newspaper clippings are also available for $.25 per copy.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 CONSTRUCTION HELPER (THS 0047)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workers compensation & medical payments provided. Contact: Joven A. Mallari dba J.A.M. Construction Co., @287-5916.

1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING (THS 0048)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Employers provided workers compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Servino & Associates Inc. dba Advanced Engineering Consult Co., @235-5073.

1 INTERNAL AUDITOR (THS 0049)
Salary:$900.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical provided. Contact: Dynamic Core Group, Inc. dba Shirley's Coffee Shop @235-5379/80.

6 COOK (THS 0050)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical provided. Contact: Dynamic Core Group, Inc. dba Shirley's Coffee Shop @235-5379/80.

1 SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTOR (THS 0051)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical expense & workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Luana Inc. @233-2434.

1 COOK (THS 0052)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Grotto Inc. @287-3303.

WHATZIT Solution: One step forward and two steps back

1 GENERAL MANAGER (THS 0053)
Salary:$700.00-$1,300.00/monthly. Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Wild Boar of America Inc. @322-5801.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (THS 0054)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical expense & workman compensation. Contact: Nicolas M. Solomon, Jr. dba Advance Auto Center @ 233-2288.

1 COOK (THS 0055)
Salary:$4.25/hour. Benefits: $100.00 food; medical expense & workman compensation. Contact: Auntie Mag's Food and Catering dba Auntie Mag's Catering @ 288-4799.

1 FOOD SERVER (THS 0056)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00 food; medical expense & workman compensation. Contact: Auntie Mag's Food and Catering dba Auntie Mag's Catering @ 288-4799.

1 WAREHOUSE WORKER (MANAGER) (SM 0058)
Salary:$6.35/hour. Benefits: Free housing if no A/C; medical insurance; vacation leave & worker's compensation. Contact: Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods, Inc. @322-6502.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

step pets pets

© 2008 WHATZIT? is a trademark of Paul Sellers
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Find today's solution in this section

LAWN CARE SERVICES
Diligence Lawn Care Services
• We offer you good services with low cost
Tel.: 287-0319
MD. NAZRUL ISLAM

FOR RENT
ONE BR. APT. NEAR MHS, in a quiet, secure area behind Calvo's Market, off Texas Rd. 24hrs. govt. & rain water. Fully air conditioned with dresser and walk in closets. All rooms have ceiling fans. Fully furnished along with its own washing machine, $425. **Call Ed at 235-0409.**

Subscribe to CNMI's First Daily Newspaper

235-NEWS

Make it a **daily** habit!

Log on to www.saipantribune.com

Love, UCLA beat Western Kentucky, 88-78

PHOENIX (AP)—Nothing comes easy for UCLA these days. With Kevin Love scoring a career-high 29 points, the Bruins nearly frittered away a 21-point halftime lead and hung on to defeat Western Kentucky 88-78 in the NCAA West Region on Thursday night.

Top-seeded UCLA (34-3) will play No. 3-seeded Xavier on Saturday for a trip to its third consecutive Final Four.

Love also had 14 rebounds. He hit 10-of-14 shots from the floor and helped rescue the Bruins for the second time in as many games.

Love wasn't the only Bruin to notch a double-double. James Keefe had 18 points and 12 rebounds, both career highs, and Russell Westbrook had 14 points and 11 rebounds.

Tyrone Brazelton scored 31 points - 25 in the second half—and Courtney Lee added 18 for 12th-seeded Western Kentucky (29-7).

Early on, the Bruins bore little resemblance to the bunch that sweated out a two-point victory over Texas A&M in the second round, blitzing the Hilltoppers with a 23-4 run midway through the first half.

UCLA led 41-20 at halftime, but Western Kentucky wouldn't go away. The Hilltoppers began pressing, and the Bruins started to unravel. They had 12 turnovers in the first 15 minutes of the second half.

Taking advantage of sloppy play by the Bruins, the Hilltoppers went on a 19-6 run to whittle the lead to 61-57 with 6:50 to play. Tyrone Brazelton capped the run by scoring eight unanswered points in less than a minute, on back-to-back 3-pointers and a layup.

The Bruins appeared in trouble when point guard Darren Collison fouled out—for the first time this year—with 5:39 to play.

But then Love scored from close range and Josh Shipp, an erratic long-range shooter, hit a 3-pointer to push UCLA's lead to 68-59 with 4:30 to play.

UCLA coach Ben Howland was so desperate to stem the tide that he called his final timeout. Steadied, the Bruins did not let the Hilltoppers draw closer than six points the rest of the way.

Perhaps it was no surprise that UCLA let the scrappy Hilltoppers back in the game. The Bruins rolled into the desert on a 12-game winning streak, but they hadn't been dominant. Five of their last eight wins had been by three points or less, and another came after they forced overtime.

The Hilltoppers had won eight straight games and reached the round of 16 for the first time since 1993, when coach Darrin Horn was a sophomore guard. At No. 12, Western Kentucky was the lowest remaining seed in the tourney, along with Villanova.

Early on, Western Kentucky looked the part of a 12th seed. The Hilltoppers came out jittery, with four turnovers in the first three minutes. And they had more turnovers (9) than field goals (6) in the first half.

Lee made two of his first 13 shots from the floor.

Things were no better at the other end, where Western Kentucky had no answer for Love.

D.J. Magley and Jeremy Evans each fouled Love in a five-second span in the first minute, and Evans went to the bench with his second foul three minutes into the game.

UCLA has had trouble generating offense recently - Love and Darren Collison scored 40 of UCLA's 51 points in the second-round victory over Texas A&M—but that all changed during the 23-4 run midway through the first half.

Four players scored during the burst, including Shipp, who hit a 3-pointer to snap an 0-for-11 slump from beyond the arc over the last three-plus games. Western Kentucky called timeout, and several Bruins greeted a relieved Shipp on his way back to the bench.

AP

UCLA's Kevin Love dunks against Western Kentucky during the first half of an NCAA men's basketball tournament West Regional semifinal, Thursday, March 27, 2008, in Phoenix.

North Carolina 68, Washington State 47

At Charlotte, N.C., Roy Williams has never stopped pushing his North Carolina team to play better defense, not even as it piled up lopsided wins and crowd-pleasing offensive displays that few teams can match.

The Tar Heels gave their Hall of Fame coach what he's been asking for in the East Regional semifinal against Washington State—and it has them a game away from the Final Four again.

Tyler Hansbrough scored 16 of his 18 points in the second half and the top-seeded Tar Heels held Washington State to 32-percent shooting in a 68-47 victory Thursday night, sending North Carolina back to the NCAA tournament's round of eight for the second straight season.

Danny Green had 15 points to help the Tar Heels (35-2) set a school record for victories while continuing their dominant tournament run. The No. 1 overall seed has won its first three NCAA games by 20 or more points for the first time in program history as it chases a record 17th trip to the Final Four.

North Carolina will play third-seeded Louisville, which beat Tennessee, on Saturday with a clear home-court advantage, playing in an arena located about two hours from its Chapel Hill campus.

On this night—facing a team that had completely shut down its first two tournament foes—everything started with a defensive performance that was the school's best in the tournament since before Williams was born.

Louisville 79, Tennessee 60

At Charlotte, N.C., Tennessee's Wayne Chism tried to pick up the loose ball, only to be quickly outnumbered. Louisville's Earl Clark and Preston Knowles both dove to the floor, and the ball deflected off Chism out of bounds.

It was what Rick Pitino loves: down and dirty defense, floor burns and hustle, and it's left the Cardinals' coach a victory away from a sixth trip to the Final Four.

Clark scored 17 points and had 12 rebounds, and Pitino's mix of defenses made life miserable for Tennessee in a 79-60 victory Thursday night that put third-seeded Louisville in the East Regional final.

Pitino, who has won an NCAA title and taken three schools to the Final Four, has Louisville playing its best basketball of the season when it counts most. After Louisville's two blowout wins last weekend, Pitino's signature zone and pressure limited the high-scoring Volunteers to 34-percent shooting. The veteran coach improved to 8-0 in regional semifinals and secured a date with top-seed North Carolina on Saturday night.

Xavier 79, West Virginia 75

At Phoenix, Three-pointers saved Xavier. Missed free throws doomed West Virginia. B.J. Raymond made two 3-pointers in the last 1:18 of overtime Thursday night and the Musketeers advanced to the West Region final with a 79-75 victory over coach Bob Huggins' Mountaineers.

Third-seeded Xavier (30-6) rallied from a six-point deficit in overtime, and will seek its first Final Four appearance when it plays the UCLA-Western Kentucky winner on Saturday.

Raymond, who had made only one field goal all night, hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key to put the Musketeers ahead 75-74 with 1:18 to play. He then shook loose on an inbounds play, took a crosscourt pass and made a 3 with the shot clock expiring with 30 seconds to go for a 78-74 lead.

Josh Duncan scored a career-high 26 points despite foul trouble to lead Xavier. Raymond's eight points all came in overtime.

Xavier, which led by 18 early in the game, rallied from a 71-65 deficit in overtime.

Joe Alexander scored 18 and had 10 rebounds for the Mountaineers (26-11).

West Virginia missed four of six free throws in the overtime. Alexander missed one with 14.2 seconds left in regulation that would have given his team a 65-64 lead.

McNamee warns students about his mistake

EVERETT, Mass. (AP)—Former New York Yankees trainer Brian McNamee resurfaced to give a brief motivational speech to a small group of workout buffs on Thursday but refused to comment on the steroid scandal that landed him and his famous former client in front of Congress.

In his first public comments since testifying that he injected seven-time Cy Young Award winner Roger Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone, McNamee gave about 25 high school athletes, coaches and parents a warning about mistakes that can tarnish one's reputation.

"My lifetime of actions can be defined by one singular monumental mistake," he said in a 12-minute talk at a friend's supplement store. "I believe firmly that everyone deserves a second chance. Every second chance needs a first step. Today, I'm taking that first step."

McNamee canceled sit-down interviews with a local television station and Associated Press reporter, saying, "I've got to think about my kids."

He did not elaborate, walking away and leaving through the back door as the lights were turned off.

McNamee was a key source for the Mitchell Report that laid bare the prevalence of steroids in baseball. Among those he admitted helping obtain steroids or HGH were Clemens and Yankees pitcher Andy Pettitte.

Pettitte has admitted using HGH, but Clemens has denied the allegations.

McNamee did not mention steroids, the Mitchell Report or his Congressional testimony. He referred only indirectly to Clemens and their bizarre, recorded telephone conversation, joking at the start that he should probably ask for tape recorders to be turned off "because I'm not too fond of that lately."

Although McNamee said he was trying to learn from his mistakes, he did not say what they were. But he began his talk by acknowledging that he had not made his name the way he intended.

"Everyone knows who I am," he said. "I wish it was for better reasons."

Benches and folding chairs were laid out between chest-high stacks of supplements offering fat burners, horny goat weed, progesterone and darker tans—the better to show off one's muscles in competition. In a glass case by the counter was a home test for cocaine.

The walls were covered with pictures of bodybuilders, including Arnold Schwarzenegger, and autographed photos of New England Patriots like Tedy Bruschi and the retired Doug Flutie. Former Boston Bruins goalie Gerry Cheevers was there in person.

On the ceiling were custom weight-lifting belts bearing the brand of store owner Steve Cardillo, who said he first met McNamee when he was making belts for pro athletes and they've remained friends. McNamee decided to make his first public appearance as a favor and in an effort to raise money for a juvenile diabetes charity; a sign for "Brian's Buddies" was on the counter when McNamee spoke, but he did mention the cause in his talk.

Instead, he offered advice on how often and how long athletes in different sports should work out. He stressed the importance of school, and told the students in the store that they can learn from his mistakes, too.

"You have to be careful what you get yourself involved in," he said. "The best guide is to go with your gut feeling. If it doesn't feel right, you probably shouldn't be going."

McNamee gave tips on specific workouts and demonstrated the technique of a modified sit-up called "power abs" on Frankie Nuzzo, a 22-year-old linebacker at Brown University and former Everett High School player.

After speaking, McNamee signed certificates with the slogan, "A lifetime of achievements can be defined by a singular monumental mistake." The listeners eagerly lined up for his autograph.

"It's kind of sad that one mistake can make a perception change," Nuzzo said. "But you could tell he's a good guy, and he's ready to make amends."

Warriors' win bolsters playoff position

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Stephen Jackson scored 14 of his 24 points in the third quarter and the Golden State Warriors bolstered their playoff position against the short-handed Portland Trail Blazers in a 111-95 victory Thursday night.

The Warriors caught a lucky break when Portland All-Star guard Brandon Roy stayed home to nurse a sore groin. Golden State maintained a half-game lead over Denver for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference and moved within a half-game of Dallas for seventh place.

Golden State's next two games are against those teams, beginning with a trip to Denver on Saturday, then a home game the following night against Dallas. That made this game against the Blazers just the latest "must win" in Golden State coach Don Nelson's mind.

The Warriors didn't come out of the gates playing that way, falling behind by 14 points in the first quarter before finding their stride. That's nothing new: Golden State has rallied from double-digit deficits in 16 of its 44 wins this season.

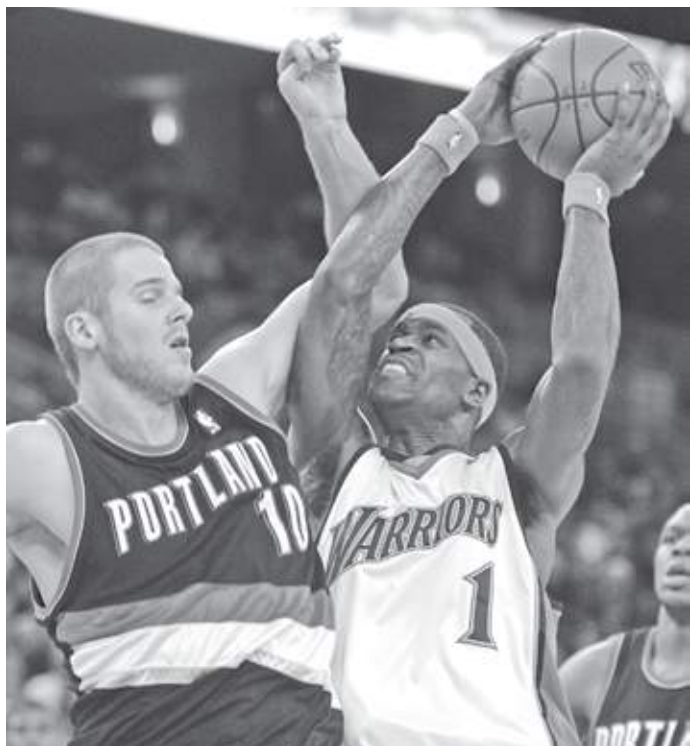
Golden State broke open a close game with a dominant third quarter, where its aggressiveness on offense paid off with 20 free throw attempts in the quarter. The Warriors made 18 of them after not going to the line once in the first half. They also shot 9-for-13 from the field, turned the ball over only once and outscored the Blazers 40-20 to take a 91-72 lead into the fourth period.

The Blazers never threatened after that and the Warriors avoided losing back-to-back games for the first time since Jan. 2-4. Golden State has alternated wins and losses for the last nine games, but might need to do better than that over the final 11 games to make the playoffs.

Monta Ellis added 18 points and 10 rebounds for Golden State. Baron Davis scored 12 on 4-for-12 shooting after missing practice Wednesday with an illness.

Steve Blake led Portland with 22 points. Jarrett Jack added 19 and LaMarcus Aldridge had 17. The Blazers (38-35) are seven games behind Golden State in the playoff race and now have their hopes set on posting their first winning season in five years.

Aldridge, a game-time decision because of a sprained right ankle, overmatched the Warriors' inside players early and scored 11 points in the first 9 minutes as Portland ran out to a 26-12 lead. Golden State erased that entire lead before halftime, taking a 41-40 edge with about 4 minutes left in the half when Al Harrington's 3-pointer capped an 11-0 run.



AP

Golden State Warriors' Stephen Jackson (1) goes up for a shot against Portland Trail Blazers' Joel Przybilla during the second half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, March 27, 2008, in Oakland, Calif.

NBA BRIEFS

Nuggets forward Nene to return to action

DENVER (AP)—Denver Nuggets forward Nene is returning to the court, 2 1/2 months after surgery to remove a malignant testicular tumor. He planned to play about 5 minutes against the Dallas Mavericks on Thursday night. Nene participated in a full scrimmage Wednesday and in the team's shootaround Thursday. Before that, he had been limited to shooting, light running and 1-on-1 drills. Nene underwent a single dose of chemotherapy last month. He averaged 6.4 points and 6.4 rebounds before his illness. The Brazilian player took an indefinite leave of absence from the team on Jan. 11.

Roy out for 4 games

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Trail Blazers guard Brandon Roy will miss the next four games because of a groin injury. Roy, an All-Star reserve, was injured in Tuesday night's 102-82 victory at home over the Washington Wizards. He did not travel with the Blazers for Thursday night's game against the Golden State Warriors. The team said Roy would be re-evaluated after the four games. The second-year guard averages a team-high 19.3 points and 5.8 assists. Forward LaMarcus Aldridge, who missed the game against the Wizards with a sprained right ankle, did travel to Oakland, Calif., for Thursday night's game and his availability was a game-time decision. The Trail Blazers (38-34) have 10 games left and need four more victories to finish with a winning record.

Pistons 85, Heat 69

At Auburn Hills, rookie Arron Afflalo had career highs of 15 points and seven rebounds as the Detroit Pistons clinched the NBA's Central Division title with a victory over the Miami Heat.

Detroit came in having lost three of four, and struggled against the hapless Heat, who dressed only nine players.

Reserve Jason Maxiell had 15 points for Detroit, while Chauncey Billups added 13 points and 11 assists.

Rookie Blake Ahearn, who came into the game with seven career points, led Miami with 15, but only two other players reached double figures.

Nuggets 118, Mavericks 105

At Denver, Carmelo Anthony scored 32 points and sparked the decisive run in the third quarter of Denver's win over sliding Dallas.

Allen Iverson added 31 points for the Nuggets, who won their fourth straight and moved one game behind the Mavericks in the Western Conference playoffs race.

The Nuggets' grand night was capped when forward Nene entered the game with 1:17 left, marking his return to the court 21⁄2 months after surgery to remove a malignant testicular tumor, and just over a month after undergoing chemotherapy.

The Nuggets also got 10 boards from Anthony and overcame a 30-point night by Josh Howard and 19 points and 15 assists from Jason Kidd.

Dallas fell to 1-1 since losing MVP Dirk Nowitzki indefinitely with knee and ankle injuries.

NBA to send four teams to Europe for another preseason tour in 2008

LONDON (AP)—The NBA is coming back to Europe for another preseason tour next season. The Miami Heat, New Jersey Nets, New Orleans Hornets and Washington Wizards will play two games each on the October trip to prepare for the 2008-09 American basketball season.

"Our third consecutive year of the NBA Europe Live is another step in our ongoing efforts to bring the excitement of the NBA to our loyal and passionate fans across Europe," NBA commissioner David Stern said in a statement. The Heat and Nets will play each other in London and Paris, while the Hornets and Wizards meet in Berlin and Barcelona, Spain. "I am looking forward to expanding the game of basketball to these great cities with my teammates,"

Heat guard Dwyane Wade said. "Being a part of Team USA Basketball in the Olympics, I know the importance of taking the next step in making the NBA a global sport." Unlike previous years, however, the NBA teams will not play local teams on the tour.

The first game between the Heat and Nets will be in Paris at the Bercy arena on Oct. 9. They will meet again on Oct. 12 at the O2 Arena in London. The Hornets and Wizards then play each other on Oct. 14 in Berlin at the O2 World, followed by another game between the two on Oct. 17 at the Palau Sant Jordi in Barcelona.

The trip is less than two months after the Beijing Olympics. London will host the 2012 Games.

"Having played in international competition, I am very aware of the passion of the European fans for the NBA, so it will very special to bring the NBA to both Paris and London," Nets guard Vince Carter said. "I am sure that my teammates will truly enjoy this unique experience."

The NBA is also expected to return to China for another preseason tour next season.

In 2006, the NBA's inaugural European tour included the Los Angeles Clippers, Philadelphia 76ers, Phoenix Suns and San Antonio Spurs. Last year, the Boston Celtics, Memphis Grizzlies, Minnesota Timberwolves and Toronto Raptors played around the continent.

The Celtics played the Timberwolves at the O2 Arena in London last year in Kevin Garnett's first game against his former team. He lead the Celtics to a 92-81 win.

A few weeks before the game, the NHL opened its regular season at the O2 Arena. The 2007 Stanley Cup champion Anaheim Ducks and the Los Angeles Kings split the series in the first regular-season games to be played in Europe.

"The return of the NBA Live Tour to London is a tremendous boost for the capital," Visit London chief executive James Bidwell said. "Last year's sell out game at The O2 attracted visitors from across the UK and Europe and bolstered London's reputation as the most prestigious global sporting city in the world."

Wilson leads Zurich Classic

AVONDALE, La. (AP)—Refreshed after a couple of weeks off, Dean Wilson birdied three of the last four holes in windy conditions Thursday for a 6-under 66 and a one-stroke lead after the first round of the Zurich Classic.

Wilson played eight straight tournaments before taking the break.

"I've struggled a little bit," Wilson said. "I took a couple weeks off and just went home and tried to clear my brain and just play golf rather than maybe sit on the range and fiddle with my swing. I think that helped."

Briny Baird, Peter Lonard and Chez Reavie opened with 67s.

Baird got to 6 under with an eagle on the par-4 sixth and a birdie on the par-5 seventh, but finished with a bogey on No. 9 to drop back to 5 under.

On the sixth, he holed out from 208 yards with a 5-wood.

"To be honest with you, I hit it just a touch thin, but it was exactly what the shot called for," Baird said. "Being a little thin it stays under the wind a little bit better."

Steve Elkington, Vaughn Taylor, Jay Williamson, Cameron Beckman and John Mallinger opened with 68s, Woody Austin topped a group at 69 and defending champion Nick Watney had a 71 on the TPC Louisiana.

For a lot of players there is a lot more on the line than the $1.116 million winner's check. For 116 of the players teeing it up, this is a chance—for some the final, for some the best—to make it into the Masters in two weeks.

"I think most of the players out here look forward to playing in the Masters and think they can actually win this week," Williamson said. "That's one of the reasons that I'm here. I've never played there, and I'm not getting any younger, unfortunately."

He's come close. Last year, Williamson finished second at the Travelers Championship.

"I was about 11 feet last year, at the Travelers from getting in, and I couldn't make the putt," Williamson said. "That's definitely in the back of my mind and I think—I would say the majority of the guys teeing it up here feel like they have a chance."

Twenty-five players in the field this week have qualified for the Masters, including defending Masters champion Zach Johnson (72) and defending British Open champion Padraig Harrington (71).

This is the third time the Zurich Classic has been played on the 7,341-yard TPC Louisiana course. Completed in time for the 2005 tournament, Hurricane Katrina hit the Pete Dye-designed course hard, flooding several holes and knocking down nearly 2,000 trees. It was closed for 10 months.

"I think this is the best conditioned course we've played on tour this year and the best set of greens I've seen in maybe four or five years on Tour," said Elkington, a consultant on the design, who describes it as a thinking-man's course.

Elkington said Katrina actually helped the course.

"We had to keep about 80 acres of trees just by law, but 50 (acres) got knocked down, so there's much more air," he said. "I think that's why the course is flourishing."

Dean Wilson waves as he walks off the 18th green with at least a share of the lead in the first round of the PGA Zurich Classic of New Orleans golf tournament at TPC Louisiana in Avondale, La., Thursday, March 27, 2008.

AP

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Boston	56	15	.789	_
Philadelphia	37	35	.514	19 1/2
Toronto	36	35	.507	20
New Jersey	31	41	.431	25 1/2
New York	20	51	.282	36

Southeast Division

x-Orlando	46	27	.630	_
Washington	37	34	.521	8
Atlanta	31	40	.437	14
Charlotte	26	45	.366	19
Miami	13	59	.181	32 1/2

Central Division

x-Detroit	51	21	.708	_
Cleveland	40	32	.556	11
Indiana	29	43	.403	22
Chicago	28	43	.394	22 1/2
Milwaukee	24	46	.343	26

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	49	21	.700	_
Houston	49	23	.681	1
San Antonio	49	23	.681	1
Dallas	45	27	.625	5
Memphis	18	53	.254	31 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	47	25	.653	_
Denver	44	28	.611	3
Portland	38	35	.521	9 1/2
Minnesota	18	52	.257	28
Seattle	17	55	.236	30

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	49	23	.681	_
Phoenix	47	24	.662	1 1/2
Golden State	44	27	.620	4 1/2
Sacramento	32	39	.451	16 1/2
L.A. Clippers	21	50	.296	27 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Denver 118, Dallas 105
Detroit 85, Miami 69
Golden State 111, Portland 95

PGA ZURICH CLASSIC SCORES

AVONDALE, Louisiana (AP)–Scores Thursday from the Zurich Classic, a $6.2 million (€4 million) U.S. PGA Tour event at the 7,341-yard, par-72 TPC Louisiana:

FIRST ROUND

Dean Wilson	34	-32	66
Briny Baird	33	34	67
Peter Lonard	33	34	67
Chez Reavie	34	33	67
Vaughn Taylor	33	35	68
Jay Williamson	34	34	68
Steve Elkington	32	36	68
Cameron Beckman	33	35	68
John Mallinger	34	- 35	69
Woody Austin	35	34	69
Joe Durant	34	35	69
Steve Flesch	35	34	69
Harrison Frazar	35	34	69
Patrick Sheehan	32	37	69
Troy Matteson	35	34	69
Nicholas Thompson	32	37	69
Ted Purdy	35	35	70
Shigeki Maruyama	35	35	70
Steve Stricker	36	34	70
Robert Karlsson	33	37	70
Robert Gamez	36	34	70
Marc Turnesa	34	36	70
Tommy Armour III	34	36	70
Tag Ridings	34	36	70
Charles Warren	35	35	70
Todd Hamilton	36	34	70
Jeff Maggert	35	35	70
Rocco Mediate	36	34	70
Brandt Jobe	37	33	70
Jin Park	38	32	70
Bubba Dickerson	34	36	70
Roland Thatcher	35	35	70
Carlos Franco	38	33	71
Bob Tway	34	37	71
Johnson Wagner	35	36	71
Garrett Willis	33	38	71
Mike Weir	36	35	71
Carl Pettersson	35	36	71
Kenny Perry	35	36	71
Mark Calcavecchia	35	36	71
Jeff Quinney	35	36	71
Pat Perez	36	35	71
Kevin Sutherland	35	36	71
WC Liang	37	34	71
Kevin Streelman	37	34	71
Scott Sterling	37	34	71
Brian Davis	37	34	71
Marco Dawson	37	34	71
Daniel Chopra	37	34	71
Padraig Harrington	36	35	71
George McNeill	34	37	71
Nick Watney	34	37	71
Nathan Green	35	36	71
Brett Quigley	36	35	71
Toru Taniguchi	36	35	71
Jeff Gove	35	36	71
Jon Mills	37	34	71
Tim Wilkinson	34	37	71
Bob Estes	37	35	72
Frank Lickliter II	37	35	72
Zach Johnson	35	37	72
Alex Cejka	37	35	72
Kevin Stadler	34	38	72
Brett Rumford	36	36	72
Y.E. Yang	36	36	72
Craig Barlow	38	34	72
Jonathan Byrd	36	36	72
Bo Van Pelt	36	36	72
John Merrick	37	35	72
Parker McLachlin	36	36	72
Chris Stroud	35	37	72
Alejandro Canizares	37	35	72
Bubba Watson	37	36	73
Retief Goosen	37	36	73
Brian Gay	35	38	73
Steve Lowery	36	37	73
Matt Kuchar	37	36	73
Rich Beem	37	36	73
Anthony Kim	36	37	73
John Daly	37	36	73
Tom Pernice, Jr.	36	37	73
Tim Clark	40	33	73
Larry Mize	36	37	73
Stewart Cink	35	38	73
Rod Pampling	37	36	73
Brian Bateman	36	37	73
Eric Axley	36	37	73
Dudley Hart	38	35	73
Charlie Wi	36	37	73
Mathew Goggin	38	35	73
Andres Romero	38	35	73
Mark Hensby	38	36	74
Lucas Glover	38	36	74
Jason Bohn	36	38	74
Will MacKenzie	37	37	74
John Riegger	38	36	74
Stephen Leaney	36	38	74
Chad Collins	37	37	74
Phil Schmitt	38	36	74
Matt Jones	38	36	74
Kenneth Ferrie	36	38	74
Nick Flanagan	37	37	74
Michael Allen	38	36	74
Justin Bolli	38	36	74
John Senden	37	37	74
J.J. Henry	38	36	74
Paul Goydos	37	37	74
Billy Mayfair	36	38	74
Tim Petrovic	37	37	74
Jonathan Kaye	35	39	74
Scott McCarron	38	36	74
Chris DiMarco	37	38	75
Chad Campbell	39	36	75
Olin Browne	36	39	75
Jim Furyk	38	37	75
Joe Ogilvie	35	40	75
Mathias Gronberg	37	38	75
Jeff Overton	40	35	75
Jose Coceres	34	41	75
Brenden Pappas	37	38	75
Tom Lehman	37	38	75
Cliff Kresge	38	37	75
Steve Marino	38	37	75
James Driscoll	39	36	75
Jason Day	37	38	75
Jesper Parnevik	38	38	76
Davis Love III	36	40	76
Ryan Armour	37	39	76
Dustin Johnson	38	38	76
Jason Gore	37	39	76
Charley Hoffman	40	36	76
Ryuji Imada	37	39	76
Chip Sullivan	37	39	76
Kevin Na	37	40	77
Fredrik Jacobson	40	37	77
David Duval	40	37	77
Martin Laird	38	39	77
Robert Garrigus	37	40	77
Ken Duke	37	-40	77
Martin Rominger	40	37	77
Shane Bertsch	41	37	78
Todd Demsey	39	39	78
Steve Allan	36	43	79
Jim McGovern	42	38	80

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

LITTLE LEAGUE STANDINGS

Majors

Red Sox	5	0
Ol'Aces	5	0
Patriots	4	1
Dragons	4	1
Survivors	4	1
Hustlers I	3	1
Dolphins	4	2
Braves	3	2
Twins	3	2
Athletics	1	4
Hustlers II	1	4
McDonald's	1	5
Dare JPO's	1	3
Lions	0	4
Pirates	0	4
Suns	0	5

Ateneo, La Salle fives battle to a standoff

MANILA, Philippines—If anybody were to script a perfect ending for a charity game between two rival schools, this was how he or she would have written it.

Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University, trading big shots down the stretch, battled to a 90-all tie in their PBA Easter Showdown at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City Sunday night, leaving the league as the big winner of the reunion match.

Ateneo had a final crack at victory—the same as two years ago when Enrico Villanueva made a triple in the dying seconds to lift the Blue Eagles—but Wesley Gonzales rimmed an 18-footer as time expired.

There are no extra periods in exhibition matches.

With no one emerging triumphant between the Eagles' and Archers' alumni sides, the winner was the PBA Players Educational Trust Fund, the event's beneficiary, which added P2 million to its account. The fund is meant for players' post-PBA career studies.

The net gain was culled from the Yakult sponsorship of the match, gate receipts and the league's 40 percent cut from the television revenues, which it split with ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

Carlo Sharma, who had 15 points and seven rebounds, almost became the hero for La Salle, making two big baskets inside the final 77 seconds to give the Archers the lead each time.

But Larry Fonacier wiped out Sharma's bank shot with a triple, giving Ateneo an 87-86 edge and then Villanueva hit two charities to erase Sharma's jumper and keep the Eagles ahead, 89-88, with 38 ticks remaining.

Ateneo could have sealed the deal after Mike Cortez flubbed two offensive tries and Gonzales grabbed the rebound. But Gonzales split his charities, setting up the game-tying free throws from Cortez with 19 seconds left.

Ateneo 90 – Villanueva 24, Gonzales 13, Racela 10, Fonacier 9, Tenorio 7, Alvarez 7, Intal 6, Membrere 5, Kramer 5, Bugia 4, Chia 0, Escalona 0.

La Salle 90 – Sharma 15, Yeo 13, Allado 11, Wilson 9, Cardona 8, Cortez 7, Telan 7, Cabatu 6, Ritualo 6, Arana 4, Aquino 2, Sta. Maria 2.

Quarters: 24-27, 46-44, 61-67, 90-90. ***(PDI)***

ROCK

From Page 28

nine hits with six earned runs and four walks in Komoro's 2-8 loss to Rock Steady on March 6.

The Dreams' Shane Mendiola is in second with 29, while Rock Steady's Palacios had 11.

Batting was also a factor for Rock Steady's early lead this season as five of the Top 10 batters are from Rock Steady. The batting leader, however, came from the D9ers with Greg F. Camacho going 7-for-11 with a .636 average.

John Tenorio, who is Camacho's teammate, is in second with a .545, while Byron Kaipat was Rock Steady's top batter with a .529 average followed by Komoro's Joe Young Kim's .500.

The next three spots are occupied by Rock Steady with Tony Celis (.467), Manny Sablan (.444), and Dane Lizama (.421) placing fifth to seventh with Kabur's Leo Bobai at eighth place with a .417, which is the same average of Rock Steady's Eddie Manibusan.

The Falcons' John Dikito rounded up the batting leaders (4-for-10) with a .400 average.

The standings could dramatically change once this week's games are added once longtime statistician Francisco M. Palacios releases the new stat sheet on Monday. The latest statistics are as of March 19 since no games were played on March 21.

BRAVES

From Page 28

the top of the fifth when the lights went out forcing Saipan Little League officials to stop the game and schedule it at a later date. Pitcher Ton Tenorio was on first.

Tenorio already pitched four shutout innings giving up one hit with six strikeouts and two walks.

Games in the Major, Junior, Senior, and Big League divisions resume today and tomorrow at the "Tan Ge" and Francisco m. Palacios fields.

Make-up matches in the four divisions are played every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday so the Little League can finish the season before the 2008 CNMI District and Asia-Pacific Regional tournaments in June.

Rota will be hosting the CNMI District Tournament, while Saipan will be the venue for the Asia-Pacific Junior, Senior, and big League Regional Tournament.

GOODWILL

From Page 28

they will play a knockout format to determine the top two finalists in the two-day ping-pong tournament.

Each player from five teams will play a total of 12 games against players from the opposing squads. It is Guam's first time to join the annual goodwill tournament.

In October last year, Saipan scored a 21-15 win over Tinian in the 2007 Saipan vs. Tinian Goodwill Games at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

After taking a 9-8 lead following the first 17 games of the one-day tournament, ping-pong players from Saipan got rolling in the afternoon matches, taking 12 of the final 19 matches to win the biannual Goodwill Games between the two islands, 21-15.

Leading the charge for MATTA was Su's undefeated 6-0 record with Gurung's 5-1 mark and the 4-2 record of Shi backing him up.

Gurung's only loss came against Ma, while Shi had her setbacks exacted by the Lu brothers.

Tinian's top triumvirate of Ma and Lu brothers all finished with identical 4-2 records, while their supporting cast of Liu, Zhang, and Qu were a combined 3-15 in the win-loss column.

In April last year, Tinian made sure the perpetual cup remained on Tinian as the powerhouse TDHC table tennis club dominated the MATTA delegation in the first leg of the 2007 Saipan vs. Tinian Goodwill Games.

Tinian's top pen-holders beat Saipan's best paddlers, 28-21, in a showdown between teams made up of six veterans of 2006's gold-medal winning CNMI Men's National Table Tennis Team at the TDHC ballroom.

WITH

From Page 28

found timely offense to go with his defense, but his toughness is a necessary ingredient. It's not important to agree with his assertion that LeBron James, one of the three best players in the league, is "overrated" as he said the other night; it's only important for the Wizards that Stevenson believes it and played like he believed it in a recent victory over Cleveland.

The Wizards (especially without Arenas) might be the only playoff team that actually needs to find a little swagger, somebody who'll talk some trash and be a little nutty, perhaps even confrontational. Jamison, Butler, Antonio Daniels, Roger Mason Jr. and Darius Songaila are all particularly level-headed dudes who could use the occasional dose of Stevenson.

Of course, the continuing mini-drama is whether Arenas will or should play again this season. Luckily, the team doctors talked some sense into Arenas Sunday night before the Pistons game. Even more important, it's good Arenas listened, which isn't a given. Had he stuck to the rehabilitation plan prescribed by the doctors in the first place last summer, Arenas very likely wouldn't have needed a second surgery. But he did his own rehab thing, rushed back too quickly, and is still in this nightmarish predicament that he wants out of, understandably.

And it's truly a dilemma.

Here's what I'd do: If the doctors give the okay, whether it's on this western swing or not until the team returns east on April 1, I'd tell Arenas he and only he makes the call to play. And if he wants back in, he can only come in off the bench and be the sixth man. That would be the plan. There's no way I'd disrupt the team chemistry at this point, and everything Arenas has said recently indicates he, too, has no intention of doing that. Good.

So he could come off the bench for the remainder of the regular season while the coaching staff assesses to what degree he could help the team in the playoffs in that capacity.

If Arenas comes off the bench firing and can find that part of his game between now and mid-April, I'd play him off the bench in the playoffs. Let the second-unit guys from Cleveland or Orlando try to guard him. It shouldn't be as difficult or as time-consuming as switching from Devin Harris to Jason Kidd, as the Mavericks are struggling mightily to do; or incorporating Shaq; or integrating four new players, as the Cavaliers are endeavoring to do. Arenas isn't some strange entity to these Wizards; they know how to play with him even though he hasn't played since November. And if Arenas can't fulfill that supplemental role or isn't healthy enough to do it, sit him down.

End the experiment and go with the team that was good enough to get into the playoffs.

Either way, Arenas's desperation to get back into the lineup shouldn't be a downer for this team. It's not out of the question the Wizards could go 3-2 out west (losing to Utah and the Lakers at the end of the trip). And even if they drop April games to Boston, Detroit and Orlando, a 5-3 finish is still reasonable. The Wizards certainly don't want to drop to seventh in the Eastern Conference and have to play Detroit in the first round, even if they have matched up well with the Pistons over the last couple of regular seasons. But finishing sixth would match the Wizards with Orlando in the first round. Finishing fifth would match them with LeBron and Cleveland, once again. And both those teams are beatable in the first round of the playoffs.

Even Detroit is puzzling; the Pistons are only 10-7 since the all-star break and seem to play all too often with a lackadaisical sense of entitlement that has cost them in each of the last two years in the playoffs.

In any case, it seems entirely possible that the Wizards, as they count down the final 13 games in what seemed like another season of misfortune due to injury, have a chance to take a turn for the better. As the Rockets lose their best player for the season and as the Mavericks lose their best player, Dirk Nowitzki, for a two- to three-week stretch that could doom their playoff chances, the Wizards are finally getting healthier and not coincidentally getting better ... enough so to look at the final lap of the season and see a team that, after legitimate doubt, appears ready and excited to at least be in the race.

Love, UCLA beat Western Kentucky, 88-78

Nothing comes easy for UCLA these days. With Kevin Love scoring a career-high 29 points, the Bruins nearly frittered away a 21-point halftime lead and hung on to defeat Western Kentucky 88-78 in the NCAA West Region on Thursday night. 25

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Warriors' win bolsters playoff position

Stephen Jackson scored 14 of his 24 points in the third quarter and the Golden State Warriors bolstered their playoff position against the short-handed Portland Trail Blazers in a 111-95 victory Thursday night. 26

Rock Steady hurlers pace pitching

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rock Steady and its pitchers are currently leading the 3rd Annual Budweiser Saipan Major League.

Rock Steady has won its first four games to remain on top of the eight-team field. Its latest win was a 17-0 crushing of Masters Baseball League finalist Kabur on March 17.

Rock Steady has been winning games by an average of 13 runs and holding their opponents to two per night.

Credit can be given to the Rock Steady bullpen, which is a combination of youth and veteran pitchers, and its seasoned hitters occupying five of the 10 spots in the batting leaders.

Saipan Little League standout Nick San Nicolas is leading the pitching category, while teammate Tony Palacios is in second place.

San Nicolas had an impressive debut this season in helping Rock Steady secure an 8-2 win over Komoro on March 6. He pitched four innings in his first start, allowing no run on one hit with nine strikeouts and two walks.

Nick San Nicolas is currently leading all pitchers in the 2008 season of the 3rd Annual Budweiser-Saipan Major League, which plays every Monday, Wednesdays, and Fridays at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

JON PEREZ

Palacios already started two games pitching for 11 innings and giving up one earned run on six hits for a 0.82 ERA.

Mel Sakisat of the 2005 champion Ford Rangers is in third spot with a 1.00 ERA after allowing one earned run on 12 hits in nine innings on the mound.

Reigning champion Tanapag Falcons' Jess Taitano, Komoro's Joe Kim Joe and Kim Joe, and Mariano San Nicolas of the Korean Dreams all have 2.25 ERAs and has pitched for four innings with one earned run and three hits.

The Falcons' Joshua Muna has pitched for seven innings in two games with two earned runs on one hit for a 2.57 ERA, while Jeb Young Kim of Komoro already started three games and surrendered seven earned runs on 19 hits for a 2.86 ERA.

Kim, however, leads the league in strikeouts with 50 after setting the record in Ks in a losing effort against Rock Steady. He pitched in no relief striking out 23 batters to break the 20-year old mark of 20 Ks set by Joe Atalig in the early years of the SML.

Kim even pitched three scoreless innings from third to fifth giving up

See ROCK on Page 27

Braves crush McDonald's in Little League

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The AA Enterprises/TCC World Tanapag Braves rallied for eight runs in bottom of the fourth to waltz past Team McDonald's, 15-5, in the Major division of the Saipan Little League on Thursday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

Nick Junior Jones pitched 3.2 innings giving up four earned runs on four hits with six strikeouts and seven walks. J.J. Lifoifoi relieved him in the top of the fifth after Jones, with two outs, walked Ian Rogolifoi.

Lifoifoi gave up consecutive walks to Jonathan Rangamar and Kindo Villagomez to load up the bases but ended McDonald's' comeback bid when he struck out Clayton Sablan.

Frankie Lieto, who walked in the first inning, went 2-for-3 with a three-run, inside-the-park home run in the second inning. He also had a triple and four RBIs.

Aside from earning the win, pitcher Jones went 2-for-2 with a triple.

The Tan Holdings Fielders, meanwhile, hold a 9-0 lead over Plus Marketing/Pacific Bio Medical Services D9ers when a scheduled power outage interrupted the match.

The Fielders, with one out and a runner on base, were batting at

See BRAVES on Page 27

Goodwill table tennis tourney kicks off today

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Opening matches of the first leg of the twice-a-year Goodwill Table Tennis Tournament begins today at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino ballroom on Tinian.

The two-day tournament will be held today, March 29, and tomorrow, March 30, where Guam will be competing against two teams each from Saipan and host Tinian.

It is the first time that the Guam Table Tennis Association is sending a team composed of three players. Team Guam will be led by 7th Palau South Pacific Mini Games veteran Carlos Gumataotao, who helped his team win the silver medal in 2005 in Koror.

JON PEREZ

Tinian's Mark Ma, from left, and Liang Wei Bin pose with Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association president Steve Lim in last year's Goodwill tournament on Saipan.

Edmund Ho and Hanamoto will join Gumataotao as they battle two three-man teams from host Tinian and the visiting Saipan squad.

Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association public information officer Mario Espeleta said he met with the table netters from Guam yesterday when he fetched them at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Tinian's Mark Ma, Charlie Cheng, and Luke Lu will lead Tinian A, while Tinian B is composed of Robin Lu, Liang Wei Bin with the third player a toss up between Bright Liu and Alfred Yu.

Micro Games women's singles gold medalist Jean Shi, team gold medal winners Su Yong Dong and Budhi Gurung are the members of Saipan Team A, while Peter De Leon, Con Pobre, and MATTA president Steve Lim comprise Saipan B.

A player needs to win five out of the 12 scheduled matches in order to move on to the semifinals where

See GOODWILL on Page 27

By MICHAEL WILBON
The Washington Post

With less, Wizards achieve more

I've got a spring crush on the Wizards. They've earned a little adoration. No, they haven't won 22 straight, they didn't swing a big deal for an all star or pick up anybody after the trade deadline. But what the Wizards have been able to do better than anybody in the NBA this season, especially over the last three weeks, is often the most underrated but important thing in team sports: hang in there.

Teams have persevered, even thrived for a short run, without their best player. The Rockets won 10 straight without Yao Ming and the Celtics went 7-2 without Kevin Garnett. But neither team was forced to play for a prolonged period without two injured all stars, the way the Wizards were. Gilbert Arenas, despite flirting with a return to the lineup, hasn't played since November. And Caron Butler missed 16 straight games. Yet, the victory over Detroit on Sunday night makes the Wizards 11-4 in their last 15 games, which has pushed them to the fifth spot in the Eastern Conference.

Six of those victories have been especially impressive. The Wizards defeated Western Conference-leading New Orleans (twice), Toronto, Cleveland, Orlando and Detroit, all of which are lock playoff teams. Two of the four losses were to streaking Houston and division-leading Orlando. With Butler back in the lineup and creeping back toward his all-star form, the Wizards suddenly look, well, formidable — like they might be able to win a series in the playoffs, which are only three weeks away.

Despite agonizing losses to the likes of Charlotte and Atlanta, the Wizards have remained patient, played with a sense of desperation and won games even while short-handed. A certain perseverance seems to have become ingrained in them.

As the Wizards headed west Monday for a five-game swing that begins with very winnable games at Portland, Seattle and Sacramento, they had a little bit of time to come to grips with the realization that with Butler in the lineup they've been able to beat all four playoff teams ahead of them in the East (Boston, Detroit, Cleveland and Orlando). In a brief conversation Monday while traveling, Coach Eddie Jordan said of Butler's influence, "Caron puts toughness, passing, scoring, defense, rebounding in the lineup."

The Wizards are a different team with Butler playing, better than improving Philly and sinking Toronto, perhaps even as complete as Orlando. Antawn Jamison is having the most complete season of his career; he's 17th in the NBA in scoring and 11th in rebounding. Brendan Haywood, easily, is having the best season of his career. DeShawn Stevenson has not only

See WITH on Page 27